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Your affectionate Mother

Ruth Patten

MEMOIRS

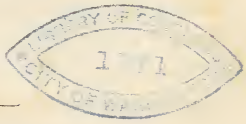
OF

MRS. RUTH PATTEN,

OF

HARTFORD, CONN.

WITH LETTERS AND INCIDENTAL SUBJECTS.



BY WILLIAM PATTEN, D. D.

" An old disciple."—Acts xxi. 16.

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MEMOIRS

OF

MRS. RUTH PATTEN.

The following Memoirs will not bring into view a woman of high literary attainments, or who moved in a very conspicuous course of public usefulness; but one of local and domestic habits, of good sense, of kind affections, of unaffected piety, who was a blessing in all the relations she sustained, and was distinguished for fortitude and hope in every trial.

Her example, in being adapted to those in the ordinary walks of life, may be more extensively beneficial, than if she had moved in a sphere in which but few can expect to be placed.

As her duties were connected with the various scenes and relations of life, instead of selecting and exhibiting them as distinct traits of character, the chronological order will be observed, of considering her—from her birth to her marriage, from her marriage to the death of her husband, and from the death of her husband to her own decease, together with those incidental subjects which belong to each of these seasons.

I.

FROM HER BIRTH TO HER MARRIAGE.

Her father was the Rev. Eleazar Wheelock, D. D., of Lebanon, Conn., whose reputation as a faithful pastor, and as a popular and powerful preacher in itinerant excursions, is not yet forgotten; though he is better known as the founder of Moor's charity school, in favor of civilizing and christianizing the Indians, and of Dartmouth College in N. H. primarily intended for the education of Missionaries, and of young men for the ministry; which remain as monuments of his christian enterprize

and benevolent exertions. It may be proper to remark, that his private piety corresponded to his public acts. The writer heard him say, not long before his death, that it was his custom, after the labors of the day were concluded, to retire for self-examination, and that for twenty years he had not laid aside his clothes at night, without being willing never to put them on again.

Her mother was Sarah, a daughter of the Rev. John Davenport, first minister of Stamford, Conn., who was son of the Rev. John Davenport, founder and pastor of the first church in New Haven, and afterwards pastor of a church in Boston, Mass., both of whom were men of ability and eminence, especially the latter, who had great influence in the civil and ecclesiastical affairs of New England.

When Dr. Wheelock married this daughter, she was the widow of a Mr. Maltby, of New Haven, by whom she had three children, a son and two daughters. The son was educated for the ministry, and, for a number of years, was the much loved pastor of a church in Ber-

muda, West Indies. He afterwards removed to Charleston, S. C. One of the daughters died in youth, an example of patience and piety; the other married Dr. Betts, of Norwalk, Conn. The descendants of the son and this daughter are respectable, and reside in each of those places.

Mrs. Sarah Wheelock was a woman of a meek and quiet spirit, active in duty, patient in trial, given to hospitality. So endeared was she to her husband, by her natural and moral qualities, that her gravestone bears the inscription, that *her character was too estimable for an epitaph.*

She had, by this marriage, four children; Theodora, who married Alexander Phelps, Esq. of Hebron, Conn., afterwards of Oxford, N. H.; Ruth, the subject of the present memoir; and Ralph, who was an assistant of his father, and an acceptable preacher of the gospel; but in consequence of epilepsy from early life, he was disqualified for becoming a stated pastor, and finally for any useful labors.

Ruth Wheelock was born March 4th, 1740.

She was an intelligent, docile child; and in her early years received all those advantages of education, which the schools in her native village could furnish. In addition to these instructions, she was placed, for a time, in the family of the Rev. Timothy Edwards of Windsor, Conn., two of whose daughters taught a select school for needle work, composition, and various branches of mental and moral improvements, in which this pupil made commendable proficiency, and was highly esteemed and beloved by the family, and by all who were acquainted with her.

She early attained maturity. At *fourteen* years of age, she might, for stature and discretion, be reputed *eighteen*. From her own good sense and taste, as well as from the example of those with whom she associated, she acquired a delicacy and refinement of manners, which highly recommended her. She was neither presuming, nor bashful. It was not, in her, the "perfection of art to conceal art;" but she acted from nature, in manifesting a delicate sensibility and what-

ever was winning in conversation and address.

Her education did not disincline her from taking a part in domestic affairs. For this she had an opportunity, as her father had entered on the plan of evangelizing the heathen, and had obtained several sons of chiefs of different tribes, and from time to time the number was increased.

These he received into his family, and admitted to his table, thinking it would favor his object to treat them as his own children; and he took several young men to educate as school-masters and missionaries, so that, at times, his family amounted to more than thirty.

In the scene of diversified industry and care thus opened, this daughter cheerfully engaged, and was unceasing and untiring in her operations. She never complained, was always alert, and appeared with a cheerful countenance, though she often abridged her hours of rest; and the result of her diversified engagements appeared, in some instances, almost a prodigy.

Her father she highly venerated and loved. She entered warmly into his views, did all in her power to alleviate his cares and promote his designs. So lovely and deserving a daughter was she, that he said, at the close of his life, that he "never had reproved her but once; and he afterwards found, that then he was under a mistake, that she was not in fault."

Her naturally active and pleasant disposition was strengthened, and rendered uniform, and she was furnished with a purer and higher principle of action, by early piety. Before she was fourteen years of age she made a public profession of religion.

Of the commencement and nature of her religious experience there is no other record, than the public relation she gave, on admission to the church. Though in relations of this kind, which were then generally required, there may be something of the same form, yet it must be believed, that they expressed the exercises, which were peculiar to each individual. That which was offered in this case

may, therefore, be considered as an authentic account of her conversion.

The following is an abstract from the relation :

"The mercy of God, in giving me a being and education in a land of gospel light, has appeared to me very great; and I think I have looked back, with regret, on my misimprovement of distinguished privileges and advantages; and especially seasons and means of grace, which I have enjoyed in such fulness. The patience, condescension and grace of God have appeared wonderful, that, after all, he should, not only indulge me with the outward means of salvation, but strive with me by his Holy Spirit.

"There have been several seasons, of late, in which I have been awakened, and much concerned respecting my eternal state; but worldly cares have, by little and little, crowded such thoughts and interests out of my mind. But about ten weeks ago, by reading a book of Mr. Allen, '*On the certainty and suddenness of the appearance of Christ to judgment*,' I was

more awakened, and more deeply impressed, so that I could take no comfort in any thing, and but little rest day, or night.

I attempted obedience to the law; but did not find that fruit from it which I expected, either in good works, or consolation. My heart was without that love which the law required; and I appeared to myself far from salvation, and not even in the way of it. I was blind, and my heart was hard. The most weighty and solemn considerations possible, were lost upon me; and I saw it was not in the power of means to change my heart; but that it must be the work of God; and yet, that the voluntary enmity of my heart to God and Christ was the only bar to my salvation. I saw myself to be in the hands of a just, righteous and sovereign God; and myself to be a most hateful creature, fit only to be made a *vessel of wrath.*

"In the evening, while walking in my chamber alone, in great distress, thinking of giving my heart to God, wishing I knew how to do it, and crying to God to teach me, and enable me

to do it, I felt a love for Christ, on which my distress ceased, and I was filled with light and joy.

"*This* I did not suppose to be conversion; and when I went down, and some inferred, from a change in my countenance, that my state was changed, I was in fear of their mistake, and felt concerned that my concern was gone. Still I rejoiced; I could not help rejoicing. My heart was full of sweetness, full of love. Christ appeared such a Saviour as I wanted; and, though he should not save *me*, I could not but rejoice in *him*.

"This was the frame of my heart, in general, till the next Sabbath, which was such a Sabbath as I have never seen before. Then I could say, *A day in thy courts is better than a thousand elsewhere;* and hearing a discourse on *Assurance*, I began to think I had already experienced a saving change.

"I continued comfortable till the next Sabbath; and then my joys were much higher. My heart and soul said, *How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts!* I chose them

for my abode, and wished to *dwell in the house of the Lord forever.* I was grieved when the worship of God was finished, and that the time was come, when I must leave his house. I find another love to all parts of religious worship and duty, another love to saints and sinners, than I ever had before.

"I think it to be the full purpose of my heart, to forsake all sin, even whatever is displeasing to God, and to devote myself wholly to his service and glory forever.

"I desire now, publicly, to enlist under Christ's banner; and ye are witnesses of my solemn vows and covenant engagements to be the Lord's; and will be witnesses against me, if ever I forsake him, and prove false to his covenant."

The change in her heart and views, here stated, did not produce so visible a change in her temper and conduct, as is seen in some other instances, as she had always been regular, and moral, and affectionate. It may be repeated, that religion did not suppress these

natural affections, nor seclude her from that social intercourse and those employments, which are proper in themselves, and which her situation required.

Natural affections are an important and extensive medium of exhibiting the influence of religion. To be *without them* is to be *worse than an infidel*, since an infidel may have natural affections; the want of them, therefore, shows the influence of sin beyond the mere denial of Christ.

The natural affections in her were regulated and strengthened, and the expression of them rendered more consistent and uniform, on her being sanctified. In the ordinances of religion, and all the means of christian improvement, she manifested a lively interest, not only by the regularity of her attention to them, but by her remarks. She was most pleased with that preaching which was most evangelical and impressive; and with those books, and that conversation which were most adapted to inform the mind and warm the heart. The

light of the sun was not more pleasing to her natural eye, than the light of truth to her soul.

At the age of eighteen she was considered one of the most accomplished and interesting of young women.

It was to her credit, that it was never her object vainly to attract the attention of young men; and if she had not opportunities to select one, as a companion for life, she never felt a preference, till she received the offer of which she accepted. In this she had the approbation of her father, who made no other objection, than the fear that the connexion might not be lasting, as a person so extraordinary must soon become mature for a higher world.

II.

FROM HER MARRIAGE TO THE DEATH OF HER HUSBAND.

She was married June 9th, 1758, to the Rev. William Patten, pastor of a church in Halifax, Plymouth county, Mass.

William Patten was born in Billerica, Mass., March 22d, 1738. His parents were Nathaniel and Mary Patten, of that place. They were both pious, well educated, and much esteemed for their exemplary conduct, their kindness as neighbors, and the interest they took in whatever called for their sympathy or aid.

They had three sons and one daughter, all of whom sustained good characters, and were in reputable standing in society.

William was their second son; and from childhood was remarkable for his observation and intelligence. When five years old, he composed a sermon on the first verse in the Bible, the sentiments and connection of which excited the surprise of his friends.

His parents, with the hope that he might be a preacher of the gospel, determined to give him a public education; and to facilitate this object, removed to Cambridge; and he was admitted a member of *Harvard College* in that place, when about twelve years of age.

Through his collegiate course he incurred

no censure; but was highly esteemed for his courteous and regular conduct, and commended for his diligence in study, and his attainments in the various branches of science. He seemed at that time, and through life, to have an almost intuitive perception of every subject to which he attended, so as to have little need of an instructor.

After graduating he determined to devote himself to the ministry; and, as was customary in those days, engaged in a school in Dedham, Mass., and pursued his theological studies under the superintendance and advice of the Rev. Mr. Havens, pastor of a church in that place.

Of the commencement and particular circumstances of his religious experience, he has left no record; but that he was then a Christian may be inferred, from the favorable opinion of his parents, and of the church to which he became united, and of the minister under whom he studied. It may likewise be inferred, from a confession of his faith presented, soon after, to a council for his ordination;

and from the judgment of the council, as it was a practice to examine a candidate for ordination, in his experimental acquaintance with religion, as well as in his doctrinal knowledge.

Earlier than he had intended, he was persuaded to enter on the ministry by engaging in an occasional supply of the pulpit in Halifax, for two or three Sabbaths. But before the time expired, he received a unanimous call from the church and people to become their pastor. The objections, from his youth and inexperience, were over-ruled by the importunity of the people, and the advice of his friends; and he was ordained Feb. 2d, 1757, seven weeks before he was nineteen years of age.

The people of Halifax, from the character given of Mrs. Patten, anticipated much profit and pleasure in her society, and hailed her arrival with great joy. To say the least, they were not disappointed. Her agreeable appearance and manners, her familiar intercourse with them, her hospitality, her chris-

tian example, and the interest she took in their welfare, rendered her an object of universal respect and love.

She here became the mother of five children, Eleazar Wheelock, Sarah, William, Ruth and Mary, to whom she attended with the kindest maternal affection, and to their instruction in religion from the earliest dawn of reason.

She was blessed with the subdued temper and harmless conduct of all of them; so that a ministerial acquaintance once said, that if any children were free from original depravity, he should suppose them to be her's.

The eldest, born March 14th, 1759, was remarkable for his observation and early piety. When only a year and nine months old he went from the room in which his mother was sitting, and called the maid and boy in the kitchen to come to prayer. They followed him, and seating himself with great seriousness in his little armed chair, he opened his child's book, and made as though he were reading a portion of Scripture. He then

arose, and, leaning his chair against his breast, said, "Infinitely great, and incomprehense Majesty." Here his mother checked him, presuming he did not understand the meaning of the words, which had probably been used by his father in the morning prayer, and that there would be an irreverence in his proceeding.

Three years after this, he came one day to his mother, trembling and with anxiety in his countenance, and enquired, "What he should do to be saved?" Taking him on her knee, she attempted to ascertain the ground of his distress. He said, "he was a sinner." She then spake to him of *Jesus Christ;* of his dying for sinners, and willingness to save all who repent of sin, and trust in him. The child was quieted, and went away.

His mother did not apprehend any saving change till three months after, when, having spoken to her little family of the character of Christ, she added, "But I fear that not one of you loves him." To which this son replied, "I am sure, Ma', that I do." The hope that

he did love him was confirmed by observing his general temper, his interest in devotion, and his consciousness of what was morally right and wrong when it had not been pointed out to him, enquiring, when he heard, or saw what was improper in other children, whether it was not wicked?

That mankind are naturally depraved was believed by Mrs. Patten; and the doctrine, if true, lies at the foundation of religious education. That the doctrine *is* true, appears from Scripture, in which it is taught explicitly and by implication, in various passages.

The gospel dispensation is founded on the fact, that mankind naturally, or as related to the first *Adam*, are in a state of sin; in correspondence to which, Christ, as the second *Adam*, is represented as the *Saviour of all men, and especially of them that believe.*

Man is born with all the endowments and faculties he will ever possess. He has a body, to which there will be no addition of a feature, or member; but only a growth. He has also the same intellectual and moral facul-

ties, which, as he advances in age, will be unfolded and brought to maturity.

If a child have intellectual and moral faculties, there must be some exercise of them. Its thoughts are not the thoughts of an animal; its will is not the will of an animal. It has not a responsibility above its intellectual capacity; but to say that it has not a moral character is to deny the possibility of its being good, or the necessity of its being saved by Christ, and leads to the belief of its annihilation.

The doctrine of the natural depravity of man does not require the belief, that any who die in infancy are lost. This is not a necessary consequence of the doctrine; nor is it asserted in Scripture, as a ground of faith. But the doctrine is important, as furnishing a subject of prayer, and a principle of instruction, that the opening mind may be referred to Christ, who, as the only Saviour of the world, is the only ground of hope.

In the mysterious course of Divine Providence Mr. Patten, after a ministry of nine years, was brought to the conclusion, that it

would contribute to his own usefulness, and be, indeed, for the benefit of the people, for him to remove to some other place. To his request for a dismission, there was a general objection. He therefore invited a council to give their advice on the subject. But it appeared to them in so dubious a light, that they referred it back to him and the church, for a determination. As he continued under the persuasion, in which he thought he was disinterested, as there was no other place which he had particularly in view, the church finally gave their consent; and his pastoral relation to them, but with an affectionate and full recommendation of his character, was dissolved September 5th, 1766.

In this trial Mrs. Patten meekly acquiesced in the will of her heavenly Father, though she was deeply affected, with concern for the church and people; and that the prospect of continuing in a place, so endeared to her in many respects, should so soon be closed. But she had the gratification afterwards to know,

that the object of Mr. Patten in requesting a dismission was, as it respected the people, realized; that it was, indeed, a sacrifice for their good.

Mr. Patten, after continuing at liberty about a year, received an invitation to become colleague pastor with the Rev. Elnathan Whitman, of the South church, in Hartford, Conn., and in that office he was installed September 23d, 1767.

That this situation was more public than the one he had left did not recommend it to Mrs. Patten. But it was agreeable to her as it brought her in the vicinity of her father, and in connexion with some who had formerly been her acquaintances; and she was willing to exert her influence in doing good, in a more extensive and conspicuous field of labor.

As there were, in those days, but few benevolent institutions or charitable societies, to give encouragement to religious enterprise, her usefulness is to be considered in her conduct in the family, in her intercourse with the

church and people with whom she had become connected, and in doing good as there were other opportunities for it.

She attended to every domestic duty, particularly the religious care of her children. She was regular in observing all the public ordinances of religion, and strict in domestic, and so far as can be known, in secret devotion. She was very hospitable to ministers and other guests; and in the parish expressed a suitable regard for those of different classes, and in different circumstances. She was not more accessible to the rich than to the poor. Though wealth and refinement have a claim to respect, yet those in humble stations are equally entitled to regard. They may be more benefitted by attentions, and often receive them with more gratitude. A minister and his wife have indeed no particular rank in society. They are not below the highest, nor above the lowest; but are equally related to all, as they are devoted to the spiritual welfare of all. Of this Mrs. Patten gave an impartial example; none thought that she des-

pised and neglected them, nor any that she was disposed to flatter.

Among other means of being useful, she undertook the instruction of female people of color, inviting them to her house several evenings in the week, which she continued much to their improvement, till discountenanced by some to whom their services belonged.

She maintained, though not a scrutinizing, yet a strict and habitual watchfulness over her children. She conversed with them daily on religion. She required them, not merely to pray by repeating forms of prayer; but to retire and offer their thoughts and desires in their own language. When able to read, she required them to read every day a portion of the Scriptures. She often importuned them not to defer religion, but resolve that they would immediately devote to it their attention, and their hearts. When she put them to bed she would converse and pray with them, kneeling by their side. Maternal authority and tenderness were so blended, in these services, that the children were pleased; and

were impressed with the conviction, that what she did was *her* duty, and what she enjoined was *theirs*.

The government, in general, was founded on moral principle. She forbad nothing which her children did not believe to be wrong; she commanded nothing which they did not believe to be right. This gave scope for every reasonable liberty; and she was loved, as very indulgent, and added the influence of conscience to other motives, for submitting to her restraints. In this way, she rarely had occasion for any chastisement; and in maintaining order, her children were affectionate to each other, and to her.

She was a woman of devotion. It was her custom, on all occasions, to resort to the throne of grace, and make known her wants and desires to God, in communing with whom was her delight, and in whom she had filial confidence.

She was fervent as well as frequent in prayer. The writer recollects, that when a little child, he went into a vacant room, and

heard a low voice, as of one in distress. Approaching the apartment from which the sound proceeded, the door of which was closed, he discovered that it was the voice of his mother in prayer—in prayer for her children, that they might be brought to love and serve God, and saved from everlasting death. This was the first serious impression on his mind in favor of religion. He felt, that it must be something different from the will and desire of his mother; and, in itself, of infinite importance.

She was scrupulous that her emotions should not betray her secret devotion; and she would, doubtless, have suppressed them on this occasion, had she not supposed that she was out of the hearing, even of a child. Her private devotions were strictly secret.

In her intercourse with God, she had, at times, such a spirit of prayer, that, as she modestly said, she seemed to know, by her freedom, or restraint, for what to pray; that what she requested was granted, and what she could not request she found afterwards could

not have been granted, had it been desired. This, however, was limited in her to particular cases, as it doubtless is to the most favored Christians. The prayers of saints are founded on the promises of God; and imply the desire that his will may be done. Yet it is not known in what manner his promises will be accomplished: what particular good will be denied, or evil permitted in order to their fulfilment. The general encouragement of the saints to pray, and their consolation in it, consist in their feeling a conformity to the will of God, and a confidence in his promises; in which sense it is certain, their prayers will be answered, and the greatest possible good be produced.

Yet when God intends to bestow some particular benefit, or to avert, or remove, some particular evil, he may excite desires in his people for the bestowment of that benefit, or deliverance from that evil, and thus answer their prayers for particular good. Such desires it would not be consistent for God to

deny; and in exciting and fulfilling them, he gives a special proof that he hears prayer. But there is reason for caution, lest the earnest desire of a thing, should be considered an evidence that it will be granted. The desire may originate in natural affection, or sympathy, and not in a supreme regard for God, and the interests of his kingdom; and the disappointment of the desire may induce the conclusion, that all prayers offered by the person are unavailing.

Soon after the removal of the family to Hartford, they were brought into great affliction, by a calamity which befel the eldest son. In attempting to save himself from a dangerous fall, he wrenched his back, which disabled him from walking, and brought on a rapid decline.

During his confinement he suffered but little pain; but his situation was wearisome, and attended with various distresses; through the whole he manifested sweetness of temper, and calmness of mind, submitting to God, and in-

dulging a meek hope of his salvation. He wrote, and repeated with feeling, the hymn, the first verse of which is,

> "Come, let us join our cheerful songs,
> With angels round the throne;
> Ten thousand thousand are their tongues,
> But all their joys are one."

Not long before his death, a respectable neighbor called on a visit, and was surprised to see him so emaciated and pale. But among other things for his consolation, he said, as he was going away, "Wheelock, you need not be in fear to die, for you have been a very good boy." Mrs. Patten accompanied the gentleman to the door, and on her return, found that her son had covered his face, and was weeping. She inquired if he were in pain? As soon as he could compose himself, he drew the covering from his face, and with eyes glistening with surprise and tears, replied, "No, mother; but only think, that Mr. S. should say, I need not be afraid to die, because I have been a good boy!" His mother observed,

"You know better than that, my son." He answered, "Yes, mother. I know that Christ died for sinners; and that I need not be in fear to die, because I love him."

The hour of removal of this son from the world, was evidently drawing near; but it finally came in a sudden and unexpected manner. One morning, without any previous indications of the change, and while the family, with Dr. Wheelock and several other ministerial friends, were at breakfast in another room, the nurse came to Mrs. Patten, with the message, that her son wished to see her, immediately. She hastened, and saw an alteration in his countenance, and that he panted for breath. He said, "Mother, I am dying; do call my father to pray for me." All went into the room. After a few questions, prayer was offered, in which he appeared, abstractedly from his distress, calmly to join. When prayer was ended, he opened his eyes; and inquiries were more particularly made, respecting his views, and the ground of his hope. In his replies to which, he said, that he was

willing to leave his parents, and friends, and all things, to be with Christ. Another prayer was offered, in which he manifested the same composure, and interest. He then opened his eyes, and as he appeared about expiring, his father could only say, "Are you still willing, my son, to die!" To which he replied, "Yes, sir, quite willing." On assenting that another prayer should be offered, he again closed his eyes, and gently clasped his hands; and in the midst of the duty, without opening his eyes, or any struggle, he expired, literally "falling asleep in Jesus." He was then but ten years and ten days of age.

Great as was the consolation of Mrs. Patten, in the decease of this child, it was a providential favor that her father was present, to sympathize in her grief and encourage her faith in its struggle with natural affection, and temporary privation. The trial was new, and difficult. Though the event was foreseen, it was not felt as a reality, till it took place. The death of a child, in any instance, is one of the greatest afflictions; in this child, there was every en-

dearing quality; and hope opened the prospect of his being a solace to her, a blessing to the family, an ornament to the church, and a light in the world. Yet she was submissive. Becoming gratitude was connected with her sorrow. In a filial temper, her feelings accorded with those of her husband, who, on returning from the funeral, observed, that he was "glad he had so good a child to give."

Beyond the force of language, this instance teaches the necessity and blessedness of trusting in Christ for salvation. As Christ is the only way of salvation, it is much more easy to lead a child to a knowledge of this way, than convince it of its own goodness. By flattery, a child may become self conceited, and its fears may be lulled; but it cannot be conscious of goodness, or be a subject of the peace of God. This the writer can testify from experience; for when, at the age of six or eight years, he was told that he was good; and when some parents adduced him as an example, which they wished their children to follow, he thought they did not know him.

He was surprised at their candor, or rather their ignorance. He felt that he was not what they supposed him to be. He had no goodness which gave him confidence before God, or rendered him willing to die.

But this subject may be better illustrated by a case, in which a different course of instruction was pursued, from the one adopted by Mrs. Patten.

The writer knew a clergyman's family, in which there was a very amiable child, eight or ten years old, who was in a decline. One afternoon, without any thing having been said to her on the subject, she surprised her mother, by saying, "Though I have wished that we might all die together, and live in heaven; yet now I dare not die; for I fear God is angry with me." Her mother replied, "Why do you think so? God cannot be angry with you, for you never did any thing wrong in your life." Not being able to convince her, she called her father, who repeated the assurance before given her, that she had done nothing wrong; that she had always been obe-

dient to her parents ; had been kind to her playmates, and gone to meeting on the Sabbath. "Still," to use the words of her mother, "accustomed as she was to place implicit confidence in the opinions of her father, it was with the greatest difficulty she was dissuaded from her apprehension of the anger of God." She was rather silenced, than convinced. She was cheered with no assurance, though she expressed no fear. What an opening was here for the parents to lead the mind of the child to Christ ! And how readily, and with what stability would it have found peace by believing in him.

Mrs. Patten, while resident in Hartford, became the mother of three additional children ; Charlotte, Nathaniel Wheelock, and George Jaffrey. After the death of her son, she continued regularly her customary duties, without any incident which requires to be recorded, till the dismission of her husband from his pastoral charge, which took place in November, 1773.

But the reader will pause to reflect, that in

so long an intermediate space, there must have been many delightful expressions of Christian character, in one so devoted to God, so affectionate to her family, so faithful in all her relations; and in those circumstances of joy and sorrow, which must have occurred; but these must be left, with the works in general of the saints, to the disclosures of the final day.

The council, convened on the dismission of Mr. Patten, were again in doubt, as to the expediency of the measure; and by their committee, referred it to his option, either to be dismissed, or left in good standing. He chose to submit it to their judgment. It appears by their result, that, considering Mr. Patten's age and eminent gifts and ministerial qualifications, and the prospect, from the want of harmony in the Society, of his being more useful elsewhere, their opinion was in favor of his going away. They accordingly pronounced the dissolution of his pastoral relation, and recommended him to the churches at large.

The afflictions of this scene were followed by various troubles, which form a memorable portion of those trials which Mrs. Patten experienced, and in which she exhibited the support and consolation of divine grace.

A colored lad, given to her by her father at her marriage, and who had been obedient and useful, became sick, and died.

Mrs. Patten had particularly labored, during a threatening decline, to bring him to a sense of his situation, and a knowledge of the way of salvation, without apparent success.

One morning, not coming down as early as usual, she went to his chamber, and found him lying on his bed, speechless, with his eyes fixed, senseless, and just expiring. She called for some of the family. The writer was one of the first who entered. He saw his mother walking the room, wringing her hands in agony, with entreaties to the Lord that he would be merciful to her servant ; and, if possible, give her some evidence that her instructions and prayers had not been in vain.

Very soon, the servant breathed more easy ;

his features became more natural; his eyes had the marks of intelligence; and he turned them mildly on his mistress. Sitting down by him, she said, "Obed, did you know that you were just entering eternity? He replied, that he did. She then proposed a series of questions, respecting his sense of sin, his views of Christ, and of the invisible world, and indeed, made every inquiry which she would, had this been their last interview.

She then left him with an aged attendant, and went down to prepare him some drink. In a few moments she returned; and Obed was lying perfectly quiet, and apparently looking at the window. The attendant said, "He is better, and will soon be able to arise." But the revival he had experienced was granted, it seems, for the consolation of his mistress, and in answer to her prayer; and not to prolong his life; for the stillness in which he lay was the sleep of death. He had expired without a struggle, or groan, or any thing to indicate his departure.

But there was, at this time, an instance still

more deeply affecting to the natural feelings of Mrs. Patten. Her lovely son, Nathaniel Wheelock, a year and nine months old, had, for several days, been sick. Its pains were occasionally violent, and produced convulsions. In one of these paroxysms it expired, July 18, 1773, while the pastor of the church was offering a prayer at the funeral of the servant, Mr. Patten being absent from home.

Mrs. Patten spake of this bereavement, as rendering her more like "a fretful child," than almost any thing that she had ever experienced. The temptation to murmur was great; a more lovely child, in appearance and temper, could scarcely be taken from any parent. From the various troubles in her situation, the loss of this child, great in itself, was felt with peculiar sensibility.

But she did not indulge murmuring. Heavily as she was burthened, she knew that there was superior strength on high for her support. Her own weakness caused her to look with the more earnestness to God; and her tears did not displease him, for she could say, "The

Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

When Mr. Patten was released from his pastoral engagements, application was made to him by several destitute churches, in which he officiated, with much acceptance; and in one of them there was a prospect of his re-settlement; but while engaged in the public services of the Sabbath, he experienced a sudden failure of voice; which rendered it necessary that he should close the meeting. After resting several months, and finding no relief to his voice, he despaired of resuming the ministry; and from his feebleness and infirmity, he was induced to conclude, that his course in life was nearly ended. His animal spirits were excessively depressed; but what was singular in such a case, his mental and moral exercises were regular and vigorous. The apprehension that he should die, gave strength to the desire, of rest in the grave, and of a home in heaven. The depression of his feelings, and consequent gloom on his mind with respect to the world, were considered by

his physicians and friends a disease; and a change of scene as indispensable to his restoration to health. They therefore advised that he should attempt a visit to his parents and relatives, in Roxbury and Boston. Without hope himself, but from regard to their feelings and opinions, he gave his consent.

But the difficulties of the undertaking were great; and, to a mind less affectionate, and believing, than Mrs. Patten's, might have been thought insuperable. The youngest child was but a year old, and not weaned; her youngest daughter, five years of age, was afflicted with a complication of disorders, and confined to the nursery; she knew of no one with whom to leave the care of the children; and the family was without income. But the journey, both from the exigence of Mr. Patten's case, and the approach of winter, could not be delayed.

Making the best arrangements in her power for a short absence, intending, after arriving at Roxbury, to leave her husband with his pa-

rents and relations, and then return, she was soon prepared for the journey.

The writer seems to see his father walking on a board, with the assistance of his wife, from the threshold of the door to the chaise, with a seat prepared for himself at their feet, as it was thought he might be of use to them.

By short stages, and intervening days of rest, it was more than three weeks before they arrived within thirty miles of Roxbury. The resolution of Mr. Patten then failed; and it seemed to him cruelty to urge him to proceed.

Leaving him to the care of the family who kept the public house, she hastened, with her son, to Roxbury. His friends, informed of his situation, procured a carriage, in which they placed a bed. With this accommodation he was brought, without much inconvenience, to those to whom he was endeared by the nearest relative ties. "Is this my son?" said his mother, as they were conveying him into the house: "O, my son!"

Mrs. Patten remained with him two weeks; and seeing no increase of unfavorable symp-

toms she readily complied with his desire, and the opinion of their friends, to return and see the state of the children.

It was winter, and the ground was covered with an unusual depth of snow, which rendered the journey, in a carriage with wheels, difficult, and very fatiguing ; but it was accomplished in three or four days.

It was well she did return. The nurse, with whom she had entrusted the children, had not been faithful. They suffered from her want of judgment, from her want of feeling, which especially appeared in the decline of the sick, though not complaining daughter. The gladness of all the children, in seeing their mother, only the gratulations and caresses of children, in such circumstances, can tell. Nor can words express the joy of Mrs. Patten in being allowed again to spread over them the wing of her maternal care. In addition to her attention by day, and watching by night, they were restored to those kind and winning instructions, which showed her interest in their everlasting peace ; and to those

prayers, which seemed to bring the blessing near to them.

By the first mail, after Mrs. Patten's return, she was informed that her husband did not suffer by her absence; and that she need not hasten back. An intimation was given, even that he might recruit, and return home in the Spring. From the supposed nature of his disorder, and his being in circumstances most favorable to recovery, she admitted the hope.

But a letter by the following mail, brought the intelligence of his departure from the world. A day or two before it took place, there were symptoms of the change, which were obvious to him as well as his friends. He lay in perfect quietness, but was too feeble to speak, except in a whisper. He said, he was sure he had loved his Master and his work. He expressed a confidence, that the God of the "widow and fatherless" would be with his family; and a firm hope of his own salvation, through the mediation of Christ. He thus rested from his labors.

In person, Mr. Patten was rather above the middle stature, and well proportioned. His countenance was manly and pleasing, his eye intelligent and observant. His voice was syllabically distinct; its tones full, and adapted to his subject. The attention of the largest audiences was arrested and fixed while he was speaking. There was an ease and grace in his gestures, and all his movements, which exhibited nature in its most improved state. His sermons were accurate, as to method and style, and awakening and instructive; and were delivered either *extempore*, or without any apparent attention to his notes. In prayer he was scriptural, copious, pertinent; always blending deep solemnity with filial confidence.

He deceased January 16th, 1775, in the 37th year of his age; and was respectfully interred in a tomb appropriated to ministers, in Roxbury.

"Spare us, O Lord, aloud we pray;
Nor let our sun go down at noon;

Thy years are one eternal day,
And must thy children die so soon?"

WATTS.

III.

FROM THE DEATH OF HER HUSBAND TO HER OWN DECEASE.

The bereavement, from its nature, and the sudden manner in which it took place and communicated to her when alone with her children, was almost overwhelming to Mrs. Patten. She felt peculiarly desolate; the agony of her feelings was great; but in consideration of her children, who clustered around her, she felt it her duty to restrain her outcries; and conscious that the affliction, with all its circumstances and connexions was known to her heavenly Father, and was of his appointment, she became submissive, and found light and peace.

The situation of Mrs. Patten was at this time peculiarly hopeless and wretched. She had a family of six children, the eldest four-

teen years, the youngest sixteen months; her daughter of five years, still sick, and requiring constant attention. She was without means of support, and not in a capacity to obtain supplies by any employment, had one offered; and it was in the midst of winter. Yet in methods not foreseen, and on which she could not calculate, provision was made for her, so that her family did not suffer.

Her father, Dr. Wheelock, wrote a letter full of sympathetic feeling, offering to do for her and her children all in his power, if she would remove in the spring to Hanover, an hundred and eighty miles to the northward. But as the settlement was new, and he was struggling with many difficulties to continue the school and college, it was not in heart to add to his cares, and increase his expenses. She therefore declined the offer.

He then requested that he might take her elder son into his family, and give him a collegiate education. An offer was likewise made by the father of Mr. Patten, and a brother in Roxbury, who was in a large grocery

concern, to take this son and bring him up to that business. Mrs. Patten, sensible of the importance that her son should be educated to some useful employment, left it to him to decide which of the two offers should be accepted.

It was naturally more agreeable to him to be with his grandfather and uncle in Roxbury, with whom he had become acquainted during the sickness of his father, and where his father had died. The vicinity of Boston, and the business of store keeping, were likewise more agreeable to him, than to be confined to study, in a wilderness situation. But as he thought there was a greater prospect of becoming a Christian by going to his grandfather Wheelock, not only from his eminent piety and zeal, but from the religious state of society at college, and there being then a revival among the students, he preferred *his* offer. In this reason of preference Mrs. Patten fully acquiesced, and sent her son the following summer.

Within a year, she received from him a let-

ter informing her that by the grace of God, he had been convinced of his lost state, and had found support and joy through faith in Christ.

Her feelings, expressed on this occasion, were a proof that her first and highest object with respect to him was attained, in his being delivered from the dominion of sin, and saved from everlasting death. This, she often said, was her desire, her *only* desire with respect to all her children. From love to God, as well as from regard to *their* welfare, it was her earnest, all absorbing wish, they should serve him, persuaded that this comprehended all good—was the "*whole* of man."

She did not fail to improve this instance of divine mercy, in connexion with the example of her former son, to excite the attention, and impress the minds of her other children in favor of religion. The example of elder children when good, is doubtless among the most important means of grace. Not only the natural affection of children for each other, but their equality in standing, and similarity of

feeling, and intimate intercourse, give the elder an influence over the younger, which even the parent does not possess. They are powerfully instrumental in regulating or perverting the younger. When not restrained, they weaken the authority of the parent over them, and render it in a great measure ineffectual.

Several of her other children Mrs. Patten might have located among relatives who kindly offered to receive them; but while it was very inconvenient for her to be left alone, with a sick child and infant, it was inexpressibly distressing to have her children dispersed. They were her greatest earthly solace. But it was a superior motive, that she could pay more attention to their religious instruction and conduct than she could expect from others. From maternal affection and Christian solicitude, she therefore resolved to continue them under her own care.

But this resolution required a strong faith in the promises of God, as she was without the visible means or prospect of support. Yet

as her resolution was founded in good intentions, she did not consider that reliance presumptuous. She did not fear to "live by faith;" and the care of God over her was apparent in providing for her according to her exigencies, and in season.

She did not express to any one her destitute and helpless situation, and ask for assistance. She thought that, like her Christian example, it was sufficiently obvious to those who were disposed to attend and minister to her relief; and that to state it in words, might appear like complaining, or bring a reproach on her for keeping her family together. She therefore allowed her situation to speak for itself; and was willing to adopt every instance of self denial possible, to attain her object.

But her wants she told to God, repairing to him on all occasions as the only object of hope; and his interpositions on her behalf were a constant source of gratitude, and often filled her with surprise.

Were the door of her dwelling to be open-

ed, though no miracle would be seen, the care of God would be scarcely less visible. No article necessary to the support and enjoyment of life was exhausted, but a supply was furnished. An instance in the case of her sick daughter, is a specimen. When Mrs. Patten was wiping a tear from her eye, because her child expressed a desire for something which could not be procured, a servant came to the door with a billet from an unknown friend, enclosing money sufficient for purchasing that article, and whatever was necessary for the family. She had daily evidence of that gracious declaration of Christ, "Your Heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of these things;" and with the disciples, when Christ inquired of them after their return from their mission, "Have ye lacked any thing?" she could reply, "Nothing." The temper of a disciple she manifested, in being without anxiety. No, never was she anxious. She was equally contented, and she exhibited equal cheerfulness of countenance when most destitute, as though the world were at her dis-

posal. "Her treasury," she said, "was on high." This was sure and inexhaustible.

That all are dependent on God, both for life and the means by which it is sustained, it were *atheism* to deny.

Trust in God does not imply the neglect or contempt of means, but it requires that he be not limited to those in our possession or view; and that he be not directed in the course he may take. It is not, therefore, presumptuous to rely on him when one is destitute of property, is incapable of laboring, and even is without sympathizing relatives and friends. In no case is "the Lord's arm shortened that he cannot save." "The hearts of all are in his hand;" "the earth is his, and the fulness thereof," and there are repeated providential occurrences by which those who trust in means are taught to fear; but those who trust in the Lord not to be discouraged.

The chief object of solicitude to Mrs. Patten at this time was her sick daughter, who continued perceptibly, though gradually to decline. It was a ground of peculiar affliction,

that from nervous weakness, the child could not bear the thought of death; and that any discourse of religion connected with that change produced an agitation which rendered it necessary to divert her attention to some other subject.

In this perplexity Mrs. Patten adapted a method of indirect instruction. She called her other children around her and catechised them; and in the answers and explanations given, communicated to her sick daughter all the truths she wished her to know. After pursuing this course for a short time, the child seemed to feel neglected that she was not questioned in her order; and said, "Ma', you may ask me questions now, for I can bear them." After this she attended with calmness and apparent satisfaction to all that was said to her. Her death was finally occasioned by the whooping cough, which operated on her with great severity. In a fit of coughing, while her agitated mother was carrying her to the air, she said, "Ma', don't be frightened, I shall soon get over it;" but without speak-

ing again she expired. This was Charlotte, a beautiful, discreet, patient, docile, and as we trust a christian child. She deceased April 21st, 1775, in the seventh year of her age.

On this occasion Mrs. Patten scarcely felt the evil of separation. She seemed to realise the voice of Christ, "She is not dead, but sleepeth." She viewed her child as "taken away from the evil to come;" as resting from her labors, and an heir of a blessed immortality. She therefore quietly resigned her to her bed in the dust, and to the arms of the Redeemer.

No longer confined by the cares of sickness, Mrs. Patten was able to pay a more general attention to the concerns of her family. Her right to the house in which she lived was doubtful, and it was necessary to have a legal decision in the case. It was a providential favor to her, that the cause, without any designed delay on her part, was continued in court seven years. This furnished a shelter for herself and children; in connexion

with which they had some facilities for gaining a subsistence ; but these were precarious, and at best, inadequate ; so that the attention of Mrs. Patten was kept awake to her dependence on God, and through confidence in him, his " peace possessed her heart and her mind."

In the winter of 1779, she was called to visit her father, supposed to be in his last sickness. She readily assented ; leaving her little family under the divine protection, she proceeded in a sleigh with one of her brothers who had come for her, and accomplished the journey without difficulty.

Their mutual joy at meeting was great ; even the melancholy considerations attending it were rich in consolation.

Her father was gratified with the assiduous, judicious and affectionate attention she devoted to him, scarcely leaving him day or night for three months ; at which time he expired. It was a satisfaction to her that she had an opportunity to minister to him in his infirmities, to relieve his cares and distresses,

to hear his christian remarks, and witness his example through his sickness and in his dying hour. He had ever expressed for her a tender love, and bestowed on her all the obligations a child could receive from a parent. She had never offended him, had always cheerfully obeyed his command; and she followed him in faithfulness till he closed his eyes in death. This took place April 24, 1779.

On her return to her family she found reason for gratitude, for the Lord had been with them to protect and bless them; so that they had not been in want, and no evil had disturbed their peace. Though young they had remembered and observed the counsels of their mother, so that she found reason only to commend them for their regularity and harmony.

After this, nothing unusual occurred in her family or connexions till April, 1780, when there was much to excite her maternal and christian feelings in the danger and rescue of her son at college. As it may properly have a place in these memoirs, and may be

useful to the reader, a brief account will be given of the scene.

This son was in his last year in college, and had accompanied his uncle, the new president, forty miles above the college ; and after fording Wild Ammonoosuc river, lodged at an aunt's about a mile beyond. In the morning, which was Sabbath, it was necessary to re-cross the river to attend public worship. With this object in view, in company with his uncle and aunt, and several of the family, he set out. But when they arrived at the river they found that it was much swollen by the copious rain which had fallen the preceding night and the dissolved snow. Several of the party crossed in a small boat ; but as it was still possible, though difficult, to ford the river, it was expedient for some to attempt it, and lead the horses that were dismounted. Of this number he offered to be one ; but in the stream his horse, on being checked, crouched and was overthrown. The rider, precipitated into the water, immediately regained his standing ; but found it impossible to resist for

a moment the force of the current. He was again overwhelmed. By repeated struggles to obtain a footing, he caught a few gasps of air; but the intermediate times of being under water were longer than he could suspend his breath, and caused very great distress.

He was soon carried into deep water, and then, from the necessity of it, thought of swimming, to which exercise he had been accustomed. Without fatigue, or even sensible effort, he rested on the surface of the water. But he had not proceeded far before his strength entirely failed him, so that he could not move a hand or foot to save the universe. As he lay on the bottom of the river, his pain abated; but the bed was hard, from the necessity and nature of the sleep into which he was falling and the inextinguishable desire of being awake to life. He reflected that he must now breathe, or breathe no more; but finding the attempt useless and distressing, he continued voluntarily to suspend his breath, and soon all sense and consciousness ceased.

On the first return of thought, he imagined

that he was on the bed where he had slept the night before, and that it was now a dark and stormy night. The scene through which he had passed occurred to him, and he supposed it to be a dream, and that it had drenched him in a cold perspiration. He resolved to start and thoroughly awake, that he might be certain it was a dream. As he made the attempt, he felt that he was weak, and concluded he would not fatigue himself more, as he should naturally awake in a moment or two. On this, he perceived a glimmering of light, and heard the clapping of hands, seemingly at a distance, but rapidly approaching; when at the time it should have reached him, he found he was lying on the shore, surrounded by weeping friends, who were striking his hands, and attempting by friction to restore him to animation. He was told that he had been in that situation fifteen or twenty minutes.

Though he saw, and heard, and felt, his sensations were those of much distress. There was but a spark of life in a body of death, ser-

ving scarcely more than to evidence its desolation. Still there was a joy—a great joy, in being again alive, and this blessing was confirmed by a restoration, ere long, to health and strength.

It might well be deemed a deficiency, were the writer not to relate his exercises and impressions during the scene through which he was carried.

He felt the solemnity of dying to be greater than he had before apprehended, and he believes that no one can have an adequate idea of it, but from experience. In preceding sicknesses and apprehensions of dying, there is some uncertainty as to the issue. Apprehension is therefore blended with a degree of hope, and the use of means for recovery. But when one is convinced by external circumstances, and his experience, that he is indeed dying, he then has a full, and it may be said, new impression of the great change.

It was thus with this son. He had, in the course of his life, been visited with seasons of dangerous sickness; he had repeatedly been

seized with strange feelings, which he did not know but might be those of death; but he did not know how much influence hope retained, amidst his fears; nor how great a difference there was, between the suspicion, and the reality of dying. But when he found, that he was in a rapid stream, his efforts to escape or resist which were wholly ineffectual; that he was far from help, and actually lying on a bed beneath the wave, there was no room to doubt that the hand of death was upon him; and this knowledge was attended with more solemnity than any apprehensions he ever before had of the subject.

But the chief solemnity of death consists in its relation to eternity. Awakened to this subject, all the scenes and interests of time appear as shadowy forms, and a darkening twilight. God will be in all its thoughts, in all its feelings, in all its hopes, or fears.

This was the experience of the son in the scene before related, and in realizing the presence of God, and that he was then

going to his tribunal, its terrors awed and distracted him.

His mind, for some time previous, had been in a state of darkness and conflict, and the danger into which he was then plunged, impressed him as a judgment. The consternation of the scene, and especially of this impression, precluded other thoughts ; but immediately on his rescue, and finding that he was a subject of mercy, the name of Christ occurred to him, and produced an exultation far superior to the joys of restored life ; and he thought, if one had reminded him of it in his distress, it would have caused him almost to leap from the water ; at least, it would have given wings to his faith, and rendered him triumphant.

It was then his determination, that if ever he should attend the dying, he would speak to them repeatedly of Christ ; that the sound of his name should be mingled with their sufferings of body and mind, and should be the last they heard in this state of sin and mortality.

"He is a rock," all else is wave and darkness.

When Mrs. Patten became acquainted with this scene, her emotions and exercises of mind may more easily be conceived than expressed; her gratitude to God, her earnest desire that this son might renewedly, and with zeal, be devoted to his service; and that all her children might be excited to attend to those "things which belong to their everlasting peace," since the "grave is without any order;" and they "knew not what a day may bring forth;" and without which, when the affectionate ties in which they are united shall be dissolved, they will fail of being associated in a state of perpetual and perfect friendship and blessedness.

Mrs. Patten continued several years after this time in a state comparatively obscure, attending to her family, instructing her children, and promoting their usefulness. She had the satisfaction of witnessing a public profession of religion by her three daughters, each of whom gave evidence of her being a

friend to Christ, and of professing his name with a desire to serve him. Blessed family! united in christian affection, in christian obedience, and in the hope of salvation.

In May, 1786, the elder son was ordained pastor of a church in Newport, R. I. As there was a parsonage house belonging to the society, he invited and urged his mother and the family to reside with him. This she thought it prudent to decline; but consented that two of her daughters should go, and her little son, as it was the wish of his brother to assist in giving him a collegiate education, that in this respect he might be on an equality with himself.

After a year she saw fit to take the place of one of her daughters, and remained in Newport two years and a half. Her courtesy and good example gained her general respect and esteem. No one, at all acquainted with her, doubted that she was a Christian. She was considered as exhibiting religion, though decidedly, yet in one of its mildest and most interesting forms. She joined the Osborne fe-

male praying meeting; and in her intercourse with Christians and others, maintained the character of being humble, devout, charitable, and in all respects exemplary.

When her younger son became prepared for his second year in college, it was necessary, either that the object of his education should be abandoned, or that the family should be broken up. The latter, with mutual feelings of regret at the separation, was adopted.

Previously to their leaving Hartford, a school had been commenced, which was continued by the eldest daughter; and on their return the three daughters unitedly engaged in the employment.

Though expedient, and in a sense necessary, it was not undertaken, nor was it conducted, on mercenary principles, but in a disposition to be employed in doing good.

The school thus commenced, gradually increased and became prosperous. Instructions were given not only in the primary and essential, but in the refined and ornamental branches. Of these branches which were not

taught in any school the sisters had attended, they acquired the knowledge by their own study. This was especially the case in needle work, both lace and embroidery; specimens of which they could develope, however complicated, ingenious and beautiful, and reproduce. The pupils had likewise opportunity of taking lessons on various subjects from masters in town.

But it was found important, to perfect their institution, that some man should be connected with it, from whom permanent instructions might be derived in criticism, mathematics, geography, and branches proper to such a department.

At this time, the younger son of Mrs. Patten had graduated; and though he was strongly inclined to mercantile pursuits, and had the encouragement of a clerk's office in one of the ships of an East India merchant; yet some trouble arising to American commerce at Canton, the voyage was indefinitely postponed.

On returning to his mother and sisters, he consented to give that assistance in the school which they desired. But that he might be

more fully employed, he concluded to attend in a separate apartment to the instruction of boys, in the literary branches necessary to qualify them for the various occupations in life; and in the classics and other books preparatory to their admission to college.

He was a thorough and critical, and at length became an universal scholar. The constitution and management of his school were very judicious, appearing in the order that was maintained, and the rapid proficiency of the pupils. His government was not by passion, or the dictate of incident, but wholly by law; so that his school was of the nature of a republic, in which the *Principal* was an impartial and firm, but lenient administrator; and the pupils felt an interest in the support of the laws. The laws were few, but comprehensive, adapted to preserve order and quiet, and promote study. They included manners and morals, requiring a courteous demeanor, forbidding profanity and falsehood, and unkind expressions and rude conduct. Religion was likewise promoted, by the stated

reading of the Scriptures, and the catechetical instructions and example of the teacher.

The two schools obtained great celebrity; and while patronized in town, applications were made from different and remote places for children to be admitted, and for board in the family. In addition to those from the New England states, some were received from South Carolina and several of the West India Islands; so that the schools at times consisted of between two and three hundred, many of them from families of the first respectability; and there were from thirty to forty in the family as boarders.

Mrs. Patten never taught in the school, but she presided in the family, and was very useful. She regularly prayed with her own daughters, and the female class of boarders. She attended to the wants and conduct of all the children; gave them advice, instructed them in propriety of behaviour, and in moral and religious duty. She wished both their natural and moral improvement—that they might excel in whatever "is lovely, virtuous,

and of good report." But it was her desire that all other things might subserve their knowledge of God and the Redeemer, and promote their walking in "the way that is everlasting," and shining as the "brightness of the firmament, and the stars forever."

Her authority was so tempered by meekness, and such were her candor, the justice of her judgment, and evident regard for their good, that she engaged in a high degree their confidence and love. They universally addressed her by the appellation of Grand Ma'; and they appeared to have for her the respect and affection of children.

Her instructions and example were salutary, as they exhibited in a consistent light the christian character. They all saw that to be such a christian was to be good; and the conviction was blessed, not only as a restraint, and a motive to an amiable demeanor, and a reverence for the Scriptures and christian institutions; but in some instances to the experience of sanctifying grace, in the choice to be the Lord's.

Through their influence, and the instructions and discipline in both the schools, the pupils were remarkable for the regularity of their conduct, and proficiency in their studies. It is not known that any one was turned away for neglect or misconduct; whereas boys in other schools and in other towns, who were refractory, and above the control of their preceptors, have, on being sent to this, spontaneously conformed to the general order, and have excelled in their attainments. It was said of the females, that there was a remarkable uniformity in them as it respected their being entirely free from affectation, and exhibiting a delicacy and propriety in their manners, with an improved mind and amiable disposition.

As the sphere of Mrs. Patten's usefulness enlarged, especially as the pecuniary resources of the family increased, her benevolence and liberality became more conspicuous.

She had ever been hospitable. This office of kindness was not confined to her relatives

and friends, either in town, or who visited her on their journies; but extended to all who were strangers and in want, and to whom she could give relief.

In this respect she exemplified the *spirit* of the command of Christ, "When thou makest a feast, call not thy friends, thy kinsmen, or rich neighbors—but the poor, the blind, the maimed, for they cannot reward thee."

In entertaining her natural relatives, her christian friends and ministers of the gospel, she showed that she considered the obligation conferred on her, rather than on them. Yet she provided a way to accommodate others. Poverty, infirmity, and even delirium, have found food and a nurse's care, and have felt peace and quietness under her roof; so that there was reason in the plea which a friendless stranger once offered for a lodging, that "she had been told, Mrs. Patten never turned any away." Hospitality was the law of her house.

She was solicitous to relieve in their own dwellings, those who could not make personal

application, sending them supplies, visiting them, and by her kind and instructive suggestions, ministering to their spiritual benefit and consolation.

She was very obliging in her intercourse with her neighbors ; " ready to lend, not hoping for any thing again," or on the principle of doing them a kindness, and not of receiving a recompense.

In the benevolent and charitable institutions and enterprises of the day, she took a lively interest, and was pleased as they multiplied, cheerfully giving them her aid.

Instead of pleading what she had done, as an excuse for not doing more, she considered new opportunities of promoting what was good, as new fields in which she might sow, with the prospect of reaping a large harvest. The harvest to which she looked forward was, the fruits of benevolent exertion. This is indeed all the good that God has done, and all that he will bestow.

She was a principal instrument in founding the Beneficent Society, in the place of her re-

sidence, for the support and education of indigent orphan, or neglected female children. The following testimonial on the subject is found among her papers.

Hartford, June 1*st*, 1816.

"The Female Beneficent Society present their grateful acknowledgments to Mrs. Ruth Patten, for her liberal aid and patronage of the Society, for her excellent counsel to the Managers, and for her exertions as their President.

They hope long to retain her as one of the first and firmest friends of the institution, and pray God to make her and her family partakers of all the unsearchable riches of Christ; and beg her to accept the assurance of their highest esteem and utmost regard.

By order of the Board,

MARY GREW, *Pres't.*

J. WATSON, *Sec'y.*"

She was one of the first contributors to Williamstown College, to the Foreign Mis-

sionary Society, to the Connecticut Bible Society, of which she and her three daughters became life members. It is difficult to enumerate the various benevolent institutions to which she belonged ; and would be impossible, as it is unnecessary to ascertain the amount of her donations to them, and to particular charitable objects. As she lived in communion with God, and in the exercise of a disposition to do good, she did not keep a register of the number of her prayers, or of time spent in them, nor of the instances and amount of her charities ; they were the course of her life, and could not be written.

She was deeply interested in the churches and their pastors, and deplored the errors and divisions that appeared among them, and prayed for their union, their purity and peace. Her charity did not lead her to overlook all differences in opinion as not important ; it did not consist in indulgence to error, but to those by whom it was adopted, with a desire that while Christians walked together, so far

as they were agreed, they might all be united in the truth.

It was her heart's desire that pure and undefiled religion might be revived and flourish; and any accounts or indications of the awakening and conversion of sinners, filled her with joy, and gave increased animation to her prayers and praises.

The missionary cause lay with habitual weight on her mind, and at times absorbed her feelings as relating to a world of sinners. Earnestly did she desire that the gospel might be sent to the heathen, and preached to the Jews, and exhibited in all those regions where, through ignorance, or delusion, or impenitence, the people sat in the "shadow of death." Fervent were her prayers for the missionaries, and she made every exertion in her power to aid their support and promote their usefulness.

In her works she was not ostentatious. She never appeared to think them important, or entitled to praise. The works themselves of Christians are the light in which they are to shine. To attempt, by boasting, to bring them

into public notice, would be like the influence of the sun on the manna, causing it to melt away. In accordance with the precept of Christ, " when she had done all, she considered that she had but performed her duty; that she was an unprofitable servant."

Without diminishing from the benevolence of her disposition, it may be observed, that Mrs. Patten was gratified with the cheerful concurrence of her daughters in her views and wishes, by which she was enabled to carry them more fully into effect.

In two instances, without a long interval of time, Mrs. Patten was brought near death. In the first, her strength suddenly failed, and she fell into a lethargic, insensible state, which continued two days, with but little hope of her recovery. When restored to reason, it appeared that the dispensation, though sudden, did not find her unprepared. Though still in apparent danger, she expressed no fear, but was quiet and resigned. The grace of which she was habitually the subject, was brought into exercise in correspondence to the trial.

She was deeply impressed with the solemnity of entering eternity; and grateful and surprised that she was restored again to life and usefulness.

The other instance was, her falling backward down a flight of stairs. This fall was very severe. It rendered her for a time insensible, it injured her neck and back, and disabled her from leaving the house for three months. It was the more remarkable, as she had recently heard of the decease of a brother and sister, and was preparing for church, with a written request, that prayer might be offered for divine support and consolation under the bereavements. That two of the family should die so near together, and she almost had joined them, deeply impressed her with a sense of the frailty of life, and its dearest connexions, and of the divine hand in shielding her in so great danger, and not increasing her paternal family's desolation and sorrow. These impressions were connected with lively gratitude to God, and renewed devotedness of herself to him with humility and zeal.

She often expressed these obligations in her confinement; and when able to attend public worship, she desired that thanks might be returned; and went in the spirit of the hymn, which she repeated.

"Among thy saints that fill thy house,
My offerings shall be paid;
There shall my zeal perform the vows
My soul in anguish made.

"How happy all thy servants are!
How great thy grace to me;
My life, which thou hast made thy care,
Lord, I devote to thee.

"Now I am thine, forever thine;
Nor shall my purpose move;
Thy hands have loos'd my bands of pain,
And bound me with thy love.

"Here, in thy courts, I leave my vows,
And thy rich grace record;
Witness, ye saints, who hear me now,
If I forsake the Lord."

Mrs. Patten was distinguished by there having been no death in her family, consisting of herself and five children, for fifty three years. She was then called to part with her younger son.

From his being an infant when his father died, and left, for a time, to a careless nurse, the impressions she then had, remained, and produced towards him a peculiar tenderness of feeling. As he grew up, he exhibited qualities adapted to gratify her wishes, and excite high expectations.

Placed providentially in her family after his collegiate education was completed, he had continued through the following years, without leaving her for scarcely a day. He reciprocated her affection, being one of the kindest, most attentive and dutiful of sons.

She indulged the hope that he was pious; and this opinion was entertained by his pastor and other christian friends. He venerated the Scriptures, appeared to understand and approve evangelical doctrines, strictly observed the Sabbath, regularly attended public

worship, and discountenanced all expressions of irreligion and vice; and was exemplary in the family, in his school, and in his intercourse in general with society.

He did not make a profession of religion, from a sense of great unworthiness, and the fear of adding to the number who dishonor the gospel by a conduct contradictory to their profession. But this was wrong; for if he saw and lamented their inconsistency, it ought to have been a motive with him to profess religion, that by divine grace he might give a better example; for which his stricter convictions of moral duty so much the more qualified him.

In his sickness he was meek and patient. For several weeks there was hope of his recovery; but his relapses were frequent and threatening. His mother and sisters were unwearied in their attentions; and not to increase their trouble, he suppressed all complaint. They conversed with him familiarly on the subject of religion, in its relation to the experiences of the present and future

states. His mother repeatedly prayed with him; but he one day said to her, with a smile, "Mother, you never pray that I may be restored to health, but only that the visitation of sickness may be sanctified to me." In this he acquiesced, for he fully concurred with her, in desiring the divine blessing on his soul, rather than in the external circumstances of his state.

He never manifested a wish in contrariety to the allotment of Providence in the situation in which he was placed. The only privation he appeared to feel was, that of attending public worship. One sabbath morning, as the bell announced the time of assembling, he sang, evidently affected at the recollection,

> "How pleased and bless'd *was* I
> To hear the people cry,
> Come, let us seek our God to day."

He expressed gratitude for the accommodations of his situation; said, "he had a pleasant home." He was sensible of great obligations to his numerous acquaintances and friends, in whose sympathy and kind attentions he found

much solace. But chiefly was he thankful to ministers and Christians in town and from abroad, for their visits and prayers, their instructions and encouragements, in which he expressed great interest, not only in words, but by tears.

After a sickness of five months, and being reduced to great weakness, his departure was very peaceful. Having had a troublesome night and morning, but experiencing some relief, he was assisted to recline back in his chair. He thought he might sleep, and tranquilly closed his eyes. The influence of death had no distress which caused him to open them again; he soon expired. This was Feb. 15, 1830, in the 57th year of his age.

From the great age and infirmities of Mrs. Patten, and the nature of the bereavement, it was apprehended that she would not survive it; that with all her knowledge and experience of religion, her physical strength would not sustain the shock. But this was not the consequence. God had denied her nothing

she had requested ; she believed that her prayers were answered, and she was quieted.

On the occasion of the funeral, at which there was a large collection of people, and many who had been the pupils of the deceased, to walk in procession as mourners, a number of the friends of Mrs. Patten watched her with concern as she sat in the room with the corpse ; but she sat without apparent agitation ; and when called to take the *last look*, she went, and gently stroking the face of her child, said, " My son, I shall soon be with you ;" and returned with a maternal smile, as though she had left him asleep in his cradle.

" My son, I shall soon be with you ;" how comprehensive and impressive the words ! I shall soon be with thee in the grave, where the weary are at rest : and I hope soon to be with thee in heaven, partaking of the fulness of joy.

Within the two following years there were two successive trials, not a little afflictive. Mrs. Patten's oldest daughter, on whom the care of the family principally devolved ; and

then the second, who was peculiarly devoted to her mother, incurred injuries by falling, which confined them, and rendered them in a measure helpless. As it is said, "All things work together for good to them that love God," Mrs. Patten had *this* evidence that she loved God, as she derived and communicated benefit from these dispensations. It was a satisfaction to her, that these beloved daughters were constantly in her presence; that she could converse with them on the works and ways of God; that she could witness their patience and resignation, (one of the instances being attended with great pain, and apprehension of a fatal issue) and that they could encourage each other in the hope of meeting in a state, where there shall be no sin, nor sickness, nor sorrow.

But chiefly by the example of their mother were the daughters encouraged. She showed a *filial* acquiescence in the will of her heavenly Father. Her submission was not constrained, but an adoption of the divine will as her own. So conspicuous was this trait in

her character, that when some external trouble has produced tremor and paleness, she has exhibited the same pleasantness of countenance and conversation, as though nothing had befallen her.

In her advanced years, though infirm, she walked to the place of public worship at least once on the Sabbath; and she made particular exertions to do it when the Lord's supper was to be administered.

In the night she had many wakeful hours, which she employed in meditation and prayer, in which her mind was peculiarly serene, and her heart calmly and uninterruptedly engaged. She considered those deprived of a great privilege, with whom all the night was passed in sleep. In the day she blended these light domestic cares, in which it pleased her to take an interest, with devotional exercises, often speaking of God, and addressing him; and repeating, or singing verses of hymns appropriate to her views and feelings, in which her feeble voice was often assisted by her children.

The veil, between her and the eternal state, seemed, at times, to be lifted up, or to have become a transparency; on which side of it she was, she appeared scarcely to know. Her heart was in heaven; and this induced her to adopt the language and praise of heaven. She had enlarged views, with corresponding impressions, of the moral state of the world, and of the prospects of the church. Deep was her sense of the deplorable condition of sinners, and of the obligations on Christians to promote their salvation. She felt a tender solicitude for those to whom she was naturally related, that they might all become the servants of Christ, and be engaged in promoting his cause. She looked forward with full confidence to the universal prevalence of the gospel, when "the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdom of our Lord and his Christ;" when the "Sun of righteousness shall shine in all nations, with healing in his beams, and there shall be nothing to hurt or destroy in all the earth." For this she fervently and constantly prayed; and performed

and promoted, so far as she was able, works subsidiary to this end.

It can scarcely be said that she had sickness before her death. An indisposition, from a slight cold, affected her for a few days. The evening preceding her decease, she sang, though in a broken manner, the psalm already transcribed, concluding with the words,

> "Witness, ye saints, who hear me now,
> If I forsake the Lord."

In the morning she arose, and continued with the family till after dinner. She then retired, for the purpose of resting a short time; but continued on the bed two or three hours, in a quiet sleep. Her youngest daughter then spoke to her, to give her some medicine and refreshment. She awoke, and said she would arise. In making the attempt, she failed; and finding it difficult, even with the assistance of her daughter, she said, she would lie a little longer. Her daughter then offered her an elixir, which she declined taking, from inconvenience, and as unnecessary. But on her daughter's saying,

"Dear mother, we wish you to be well," she replied, "I know it, my child," and drank it. Her daughter then left her for a few moments —but on her return, found that she had expired. Her eyes were closed, her countenance was placid, her hands were clasped, and a tear was on her cheek, indicating that she was in an act of supplication when her spirit ascended to the region of praise.

Thus terminated, December 5th, 1831, the life of one whom the Lord had sustained ninety-one years and nine months, and seventy-eight as a professor of the gospel. It is worthy of remark, that it was her last expression in the public profession which she made of religion, "Ye are witnesses of my solemn vows and engagements to be the Lord's; and ye will be witnesses against me if ever I forsake him." And it was her last expression in her hymn on earth,

> "Witness, ye saints, who hear me now,
> If I forsake the Lord."

By the grace of God she was supported in all trials, and continued faithful unto death.

So strong was the impression on the minds of her children and friends, that she was a Christian, and an heir of immortal life; so familiar had the spiritual state become, and so near had it been brought to them, by her conversation, her hopes and praises, that they viewed her, rather in relation to God and heaven, than to this frail world, and the grave.

At her funeral, which was respectfully attended, the sentiments of the following hymn were felt to be just:

"Ah! lovely appearance of death,
No sight upon earth is so fair;
Not all the gay pageants that breathe,
Can with a dead body compare.

"With solemn delight I survey
The corpse, when the spirit is fled;
In love with the beautiful clay,
And longing to lie in its stead."

WHITFIELD.

The following Sabbath a discourse was delivered by the Rev. Dr. Hawes, pastor of the

church to which she belonged, on the character and blessedness of the Christian; and in a very judicious and feeling manner, he executed her request, that, after her decease, public thanks might be offered to God, for his mercy and faithfulness in being with her, and sustaining her through her long journey in the wilderness.

She likewise mentioned, repeatedly, that it would be a gratification, could she believe that some memoirs would be published of her life; not that she might be known and commended, but that she might add her testimony to the faithfulness of God, and furnish encouragement to others to trust in him, in the darkest seasons, and in all their trials.

This must have been her motive, for she was not ostentatious. She sought, not to appear, but to be a disciple of Christ. She neither prayed, nor read the Scriptures, nor practised any duty merely as a form. The flush on her moral countenance was not paint, but the result of pure and warm affection. Adopting the will of God, she had respect to all his

commands, and submitted to all his dispensations. While "she lived, she lived to the Lord; when she died, she died to the Lord; living and dying, she was the Lord's"

They who are thus devoted to the Redeemer, shall be guided and supported; they shall "go from one degree of grace to another, and finish their course with joy, and shall be united to the spirits of the just made perfect, in the kingdom of heaven."

The following tributes of sympathy with the family, and affection and respect for the memory of Mrs. Patten, are published with gratitude to the authors.

"Feb. 7th, 1832.

To S. R. and M. Patten.

My Dear Friends,

Your letter of Dec. 31st, received but a few days since, gave me the first intelligence of the decease of my aged friend, and your venerable mother.

It was a great mercy that she was so gently released from a world of sin and woe. The

world needed her, but she had long blessed it, and God's time had come for receiving her to her reward.

I sympathize with you: but this new breaking of tender ties may be the very means of uniting you more closely to the departed righteous person.

The death of such a woman ought to be commemorated by a good poet; yet have I ventured to say a few things of her, in the measure of poetry, which I enclose.

May the Father of mercies sanctify this affliction, and make you such as she was whom you mourn.

I am, with great regard,

Your sincere friend,

A."

ON MADAM PATTEN.

The aged pilgrim, then, has found repose,
A shelter in the grave. Her joyous youth,
By grace and beauty armed with gentle power,
Was quickly pass'd. She felt the new formed ties
Of life; yet soon, amidst a mother's cares,
The arm on which in confidence and love

She leaned, was smitten by a fatal shaft,
And powerless fell. The widow's weeds she wore,
Nor ceas'd to wear for many a year, till death.
But she had joys, of which the world thinks not ;
Her soul was stay'd on God. A Father's hand,
In love correcting, not in angry mood,
In ev'ry chastisement she seem'd serene ;
She lifted up her head, in faith and hope,
Amid the storm. As earthly blessings fled,
She cried, "Now, Lord, I'll love thee for thyself alone."

On forms of youthful loveliness, the eye
Gazes, entranc'd. The rare and lofty zeal
Of gentleness and energy combined,
Toiling for good of out-cast, wandering men,
Is object of delight. But neither youth
Arrayed in beauty, nor yet years mature,
Intelligent, refined, and nobly bent,
Shed such a radiance round, as hoary age
Calm in sharp discipline, and grasping firm
The promises of God, blessing by prayer,
A heedless world ; and glad in glorious hope
Of quick translation to a home on high,
To taste of heaven's illimitable good.

The venerable saint has entered into rest.
Without a pang, she gently fell asleep ;—
Departed from the earth, she blesses still
The lingerers behind, by prayers of faith,

Long uttered, and by bright example, too,
Which lives in many a heart that knew her worth.
She blesses me. I venerate her name.

Monday, Dec. 12, 1831.

Miss R. Patten,

My dear Madam,

May I present to yourself and sisters, the annexed slight tribute to the memory of that departed excellence, which to know, was to revere and love; and with expressions of sympathy, and ardent wishes that our own death may be as peaceful and happy as her's whose life you have cheered by the purest filial affection,

I remain

Yours, respectfully,

L. H. SIGOURNEY.

Thoughts on the Death of Madam Patten.

I thought that death was terrible. I've seen
His ministry on the distracted brow,
The glazing eye, the struggles and the groan
With which the heart strings break.

Yet here was one
Whose summoned breath went forth as peacefully
As folds the spent rose when the day is done.
Life still was dear; for, with a healthful rod,
That charity, whose fruit is happiness,
Did grow and blossom in her; and the light
Of her own cheerful spirit, flowing out,
Did tinge earth's rain-drops with the dew of heaven.

Time had respected her, and spared her brow
Its beauty; and her heart the unchilled warmth
Of these affections, gentle and sublime,
Which make the fire-side holy. Hand in hand
With these her care had nurtured, and who joy'd
To pay their debt of gratitude, she passed
Benign and graceful down the vale of age,
Wrapp'd up in tender love. Without a sigh,
A change of feature, or a shaded smile,
She gave her hand to the stern messenger;
And as a glad child seeks its Father's arms,
Went home.

She, in her Saviour's ranks had done
A veteran's service; and with Polycarp,
Might say to death; "For more than fourscore years
He was my Lord. Shall I deny him now?"
No, no; thou could'st not turn away from Him
Who was thy hope from youth; and on whose word
Thy feebleness of hoary hairs was staid.

Before his Father and the angel trust
He will adjudge thee faithful.

So, farewell,
Blessed and full of days! No more thy prayer
Up through the solitude of night shall go
To bless thy children's children; nor thy soul
Yearn for re-union to those kindred ones
Who went to rest before thee. 'Twas not meet
That thou should'st longer tarry from the bliss
Which God reserveth for the pure in heart.

Extracts from the Sermon delivered by her son, in his church in Newport, December 11th, 1830, on occasion of her death. Those parts which described her character are omitted, as they are contained in the preceding memoirs.

1st Thess. iv. 13, 14.

"But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those which are asleep, that ye sorrow not even as others, which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them that sleep in Jesus, will God bring with him."

"The greatest of worldly sorrows is the dissolution of those ties which bind us to so-

ciety. Society is the light of life. The death of a friend sometimes produces a sense of desolation which changes the whole aspect of the world.

Death is the most despairing of events. If a friend be absent on a journey, we expect his return; if he be sick, we indulge the hope of his recovery; but when he dies, all hope is extinguished. "He shall return no more to his house, neither shall his place know him any more."

This cause of sorrow is common to all. Yet were our friends in that change to cease to exist; were they to be "as though they had never been," the reason for sorrow would be inexpressibly enhanced. But we are taught by Revelation, that the soul has a continued existence, and that the body shall be restored to life, so that it is not dead, but asleep.

For this knowledge we are indebted solely to revelation. It was not included, by the heathen, in their hope of immortality. Their hope was confined entirely to the soul. The

resurrection of the body, when suggested to them, from its contrariety to nature and experience, was rejected as incredible. The doctrine, though expressed in former revelations, is brought more clearly to light since the appearance of Christ, and is confirmed by his resurrection from the dead. He asserts, that "all who are in their graves shall hear his voice, and come forth." It is said, that "we must all stand before the judgment seat of Christ, and give an account of the deeds done in the body." In our text the resurrection of the saints is argued from the resurrection of Christ, "If we believe that Jesus died and rose again, them also that sleep in Jesus will God bring with him;" and the general resurrection of the dead is argued by the apostle from the same topic. If there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen; but Christ is risen, and become the first fruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead."

The knowledge of this doctrine is not, in

itself, a consolation, for in the future state all will not be happy; and to be miserable is more to be deplored than not to exist. The resurrection will be a blessing only to those who *sleep in Jesus*. In order to this it is necessary, while in life, to become his disciple. It is impossible that any relation to him should commence when the body is in the grave; for there all those intellectual and moral capacities and exercises of the soul, of which the body was formerly the organ, have gone with the soul to an invisible state, and the body is left senseless and inanimate. "In the grave there is no wisdom, nor work, nor device, nor knowledge." Were it possible for the soul, in this separation, to experience a change of character, the body could have no interest in it, as its operative and vital connexion with the soul is dissolved, and it has turned to dust.

To be a disciple of Christ is represented in various passages of scripture, and by various figures, as being *in Him*. "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature." "There is no

condemnation to them that are in Him." "That I may be found in Him." "As ye have received Jesus Christ the Lord, so walk ye in Him, rooted and built up in Him." There is no phrase more expressive of the entire dependence of the believer on Christ, and of the complete influence of Christ over him. As it is said in a natural sense, that "in God we live, and move, and have our being;" so the believer, by being in Christ, derives from Him life, light, and strength; his defence from evil, and all his supplies and hope of good.

They who are thus in Christ while they live, when they die sleep in Him. They are mystically his body. As he has arisen from the dead, and ascended to heaven, and is invested with all authority, he will release them from the bands of death, and give them the victory over all the powers of darkness, and crown them with glory in his kingdom. In vain did he die, in vain does he live, if they who believe in him shall not experience complete salvation.

This subject is necessary to general conso-

lation. It is so to the speaker and his family connections, who have recently been bereaved of their mother. It is the language of our feelings, "Art thou indeed gone? the nurse of our infancy, the guardian of our childhood, the guide of our youth? our counsellor at all times, to whom we resorted in our perplexities and troubles, and in whose love, prudence, and judgment, we so safely confided? Thou, who wast so importunate in thy prayers for us through life; by our bed side, in the family, and in secret? Alas! mother, art thou gone? In the house, so endeared to us by thy presence, thou art no where to be found; not even in the chamber where in feebleness thou wast accustomed to repose, not a whisper of thy breath is to be heard. Shall we then go to the place of burial? Here we are taught that we shall see thy face no more; that thy mild eye, thy maternal smile, and every thing interesting in thy appearance, are obliterated in dust.

Oppressed with grief, and encompassed with darkness, we hear a voice from heaven, say-

ing, " Sorrow not as others who have no hope. They who sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." This assurance, with gratitude we receive, and will not sorrow as others who have no hope.

Mother, thou art not dead. Thou hast gone to the bosom, not of Abraham, but of Christ, his promised son, our Lord and Saviour. Thou art united to the spirits of the just made perfect.

How great must be her joy in seeing Him, " whom, having not seen, she loved." How great must be her joy in seeing those Christian relatives and friends from whom she was separated in tears! How great must be her joy in meeting the patriarchs and prophets, the apostles and martyrs, from whose writings and example she had derived so much instruction and encouragement! How great must be her joy in seeing the mysteries of providence explained, and the designs of God unfolded, and in having the clearest view of his perfection, and enjoying the unclouded light of his countenance! As included in his designs, and

faithfulness, she knows that her body, which sleeps in the dust, shall be raised spiritual and glorious ; that as a part of the constitution of her nature, it is in covenant with Christ, and when he returns to judge the world, it shall awake in his likeness, and re-united to the soul, she shall be presented faultless before the presence of his glory, and with all the redeemed, shall have an open and abundant entrance ministered to her into the everlasting kingdom and joy of the Lord.

This instance of bereavement, in which our sorrow is so much assuaged by hope, is adapted to our encouragement. May the life and death of our friend be sanctified to us, and to all who were acquainted with her. May her instructions be impressed on the minds and hearts of her children. May her example be followed. May her prayers be answered. May her removal from the world be followed with an addition to the church, and an increase of faith and obedience in the saints. Then her death will be a blessing as well as her life, and greater will be our reason to rejoice than mourn.

REMARKS

On the Public Relation given by Mrs. Patten, of her Christian Experience.

As in her subsequent life there was evidence of her being a real Christian, as in her temper in all trials, and her works on all occasions, she "adorned the doctrines of God our Saviour," there must have been, in the commencement of her religious experience, the elements of the Christian character. These it may be useful to examine.

1st. She was convinced of sin; that her heart was depraved; that she was an enemy to God.

As the law of God requires only love, all sin must originate, and be seated, in the heart. A conviction of sin implies, therefore, a consciousness of depravity of heart. To exculpate the heart, and yet condemn the conduct, is absurd; it is like condemning the fruit, and yet justifying the tree that bears it.

She had not been conscious of depravity of

heart, for she had exercised natural affections, and expressed them, according to her natural views, in all relations. In this respect she was peculiarly blameless, and might say, she had "kept the divine commands from her childhood." But when brought to see the nature of the divine law; that it required her to "love God with all her heart, and her neighbor as herself," she found that *this* love she had not exercised; and therefore that she was a transgressor.

In being a transgressor, she was constrained to admit the conviction, that she was an enemy to God. In no other temper of heart than this can the law be transgressed; for God himself is the object of that love which his law requires. To transgress is, therefore, not only to violate the authority by which the law is enacted, but to refuse that love for God which the precept requires. In transgressing, there must therefore be enmity to God. There can be no neutrality of character in one, as a subject of this law. If the law can-

not be transgressed unless in enmity to God, the transgression of it is evidently sinful; for it must be sinful to be an enemy to God.

In correspondence to this, it is written, "The carnal mind is enmity against God. It is not subject to his law, neither indeed can be;" and the apostle Paul observes, that "though he had lived in all good conscience before God, yet when the commandment came, sin revived, and he died;" and that "the commandment which was ordained unto life, he found to be unto death," condemning him for his transgression of it.

2. She attempted to recommend herself to God, by the works of the law, but did not, in this way, find peace.

When one, without love, attempts to obey the law, he does not act from the *spirit* of obedience; he obeys, only in *letter* or form; and therefore his works are not truly righteous.

In addition to this, when the law has been once transgressed, it is impossible, by future

obedience, though it were perfect, to obtain justification by it, or be relieved from condemnation. "The law knows no mercy." It makes no provision for pardon, on repentance and future obedience. It pronounces a curse on "every one who continues not in all things, written in the law, to do them," and considers him "who offends in one point, as guilty of the whole law." Not even the saint, either in this life, or to eternity, will be justified by his own works; for he will ever be the same person who once transgressed the law, and therefore has not rendered that entire obedience which the law requires.

3dly. She was convinced that the depravity of her heart was the only bar to her salvation.

God can, and does require of a creature nothing more than his heart; more than this a creature cannot give. To give his heart is to give *himself*, and all that he has.

From the provision made in the gospel for pardon and eternal life, to give the heart to God is all that is necessary to salvation.

Then the understanding will be enlightened, and all the faculties of the soul will be properly exercised, and brought into submission to God. With justice therefore, was she convinced that the depravity of her heart was the only obstacle in the way of her salvation.

4thly. She found that she could not give her heart to God, and that no means, or created agent, could enable her to do it; but that it must be the work of the Spirit of God.

She must give her heart *herself*, else it would not be her act; yet she could not do it *of* herself. There is a contradiction in supposing that a heart inimical to God, should, of itself, be inclined to love him, or give itself to him in friendship. Convinced, through her understanding, and by the medium of conscience, of the depravity of her heart, she found it to be a plague which she could not cure, a bond of iniquity which she could not break; but guilty and perilous as the exercise was, that it would still rise in opposition to God.

Nor could she find relief from the power of

means. Means refer to some agent, without whom they are nothing. What is a pen without a hand to write? or a harp without some one to touch its strings? The means of grace refer to the agency of God, and of man. They are means by which God instructs and converts sinners; and they are means, in the use of which sinners become instructed and converted. In these means, God and man may co-operate; or they may make use of the same means, at the same time. But no one can co-operate with God in that power by which the means are rendered effectual. This belongs to God alone. He can have no partner in this power more than in his throne. This is necessary, that salvation may be ascribed to him, and be to "the praise of the glory of his grace."

In the sense explained, the apostle Paul speaks of himself and other ministers, as co-operating with God, if the word *with*, rather than *of*, be a just translation of the passage. "We are workers together *with* God." He co-operated with God in using means to con-

vince and convert sinners, and to edify the saints; but he wholly disclaims any part of that power by which his labors were rendered effectual. Though he was not "behind the *chiefest* of the apostles, he was nothing." "All his sufficiency was of God."

God would always render the means of grace effectual, were it his sole object in them to save mankind; but it is also his design to show the exceeding depravity and obstinacy of the sinful heart, and the justice with which he may destroy, and his grace in saving the transgressor. He does not, therefore, accompany with his sanctifying influence, those means which are employed more immediately and solely by himself. All his dispensations are means of grace, as they are adapted to teach men his righteousness and goodness, and bring them to repentance. This is true of the light of the sun, and rain from heaven, and of all the divine mercies and judgments.

For this reason, the ministry of the most eminent and faithful servants of God is not, in all instances, attended with success. This was

true of Noah, who preached to a world of sinners, that remained impenitent; of Moses and Aaron, in their mission to Pharaoh, who refused to obey the Lord, and let Israel go; of the Prophets and apostles; and especially of Christ, who said to the Jews, that they "had seen and hated both him and the father, and that they had "no cloak for their sins." And he places it in a clear light, by the figure of a "barren fig-tree," which was spared *another* year, that every possible cultivation should be bestowed on it; and if then it should not bear fruit, it was to be *cut down*.

In his regenerating grace, God operates according to the moral nature, or free agency of man. He does not compel, but *inclines*. His influence is not felt, but experienced. It is in this respect, like the power of Christ in giving sight to the blind. From their knowing that they were once blind, but that then they saw, they knew that the power of Christ had been exerted in their favor.

The convert *wills*, which is an evidence that he is free. But this will is an effect; and as

there was no adequate cause for it in his own heart, there must be found a reason in the previous agency of God. They cannot be simultaneous, for a cause must, of necessity, precede the existence of its effect. In correspondence to this, the apostle Paul styles Christians, " God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus, unto good works ;" and he exhorts them to " work out their salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God that worketh in them to will and to do of his good pleasure." If men depend on God for the support, progress, and completion of the work of sanctification, they must be dependant on him for the commencement of that work.

5thly. The conviction of guilt and helplessness, and of her dependance on God, was attended with great distress, and with earnest desires that she might know how to give her heart to God, and with cries to him that he would teach her, and enable her to do it.

When dependance on God is made a plea for neglecting religion, it shows that the mind is not convinced of sin, nor awakened to its

awful consequences. The acknowledgment is merely theoretic, and is adopted as a refuge for continued impenitence and disobedience.

A real conviction of sin and danger will cause inexpressible distress, and induce the soul to look to God with earnest desire to be taught the way of deliverance, and brought to the experience of it. This desire is natural; it is the desire of happiness, and in itself considered, is neither sinful nor holy. It is a means by which God brings the sinner to him. It is one of the most important, and a necessary means of grace, for they who are without the desire of salvation are without natural as well as moral affection; they are "twice dead, and ready to be plucked up by the roots."

It is likewise the natural consequence of a sense of dependance on God, to look to him for deliverance. From him alone, help can come; and it is not presumptuous to cry to him for it, since salvation is possible, and the blessing is desired in the way that God may

teach, and on the terms he may enable the soul to perform.

6thly. In this state of mind, she had a sense of the sovereignty of God; that she was in his hands, and that it depended on his will, whether she should be saved, or left to perish. She was a transgressor of his law, and therefore in the hands of God, as sovereign. Though he might save, he might justly destroy; and as salvation would be of grace, it must be a sovereign act. In the dispensation of mercy, God is influenced by what he sees to be *best*. That he does not save all, is not owing to a want of compassion, or willingness that they should be saved; but to its not being consistent. He is therefore sovereign in the determination to do WHAT IS BEST. This is the character in which he requires love by his law.

Mrs. Patten was convinced of her dependance on the will of God; and awaited, in the deepest possible concern, his decision.

7thly. She was brought to light and peace, by being brought to love Christ.

She might have expected relief from God, as infinite in mercy. Though mercy is an essential attribute of the divine nature, yet it can be exercised only through the medium of the Son. To believe in God as merciful, without equal faith in the Son, is to believe in him in a sense in which he cannot save. Mrs. Patten had heard of Jesus Christ as a Saviour, and assented to the representation; but she had not considered, or understood his character. In heart she was a Unitarian. But when God revealed his Son in her, she was "brought out of darkness into his marvellous light. She realized the truth of the words of Christ, "He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father," and "This is the will of Him who sent me, that he that seeth the Son, and believeth in him, may have everlasting life."

8th. It is not an objection to her experience, that she did not know, at the time, that it was of a saving nature.

As Christ must be declared, before one can believe in him; so faith in his character as

Saviour, must precede the knowledge of one's personal salvation. As they are distinct, they may be separated by a shorter or longer interval of time. Salvation does not depend on the assurance of salvation, but on previous exercises which are the ground of that assurance.

In true faith, love for Christ is exercised; and thus the attention is naturally attracted to him, and dwells on him. The believer sees such an excellence and glory in his character, as to love him and rejoice in him without thinking of himself, or expecting or desiring any other happiness. This corresponds to the expression of the apostle, "whom, having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory."

Reflecting on this experience, she found it a testimony of her being a friend to Christ; and therefore that she was his disciple, and an heir of his kingdom.

9th. She was brought to exercise a new love for her fellow men.

As the second command is like the first, if she had a new love for God, she had a new love for her neighbor. She became sensible of her relation to all mankind, as children of the same family; she perceived the distinction of character between the righteous and the wicked; and while she felt a complacency in the righteous, she earnestly desired the repentance and salvation of the wicked; and thus was disposed to do good to all men.

10th. It was her desire to enter publicly into covenant with the Lord, and to devote herself to him wholly and forever; and to seal her engagements by communing in the supper. From this she was not deterred by a sense of unworthiness, nor was she influenced in proceeding that she might recommend herself; but she acted from love to Christ, and regard for all his commands, and with confidence in his grace and faithfulness, that "she should be kept from falling, and finally be presented faultless before the presence of his glory."

True religion is the impression of truth in the heart. Christ prayed to the Father for his

people, " Sanctify them through thy truth ; thy word is truth." The word of God is represented as *seed*, the fruits of which are all the graces of the christian character, and all the joys of the kingdom of heaven.

If there be false doctrines, there may be false experiences of religion ; for the religion of men ever corresponds to the doctrines they believe. This is apparent in the general denominations of religion among men. The religion of idolaters corresponds to what they believe of the various idols whom they worship ; the religion of the Mahometans, to what they believe of the character and doctrines of Mahomet ; of the Jews, to what they believe respecting the writing of Moses.

Among those who profess to believe the gospel, there may be views of its doctrines so contrary to truth as to be inconsistent with the hope of salvation. Christ speaks of " a light in man that is darkness." Even his disciples did not, in all instances, know " what manner of spirit they were of;" and we are directed to " try the spirits that we may know

which is of God." As all true Christians agree in the essential doctrines of the gospel, so their experiences agree in essential principles, however they may vary in circumstances and forms. In all respects no two are alike. From the danger of delusion, each one should have a sense of the importance of "examining himself, whether he be in faith," and any assistance in this duty from the experience of those who have finished their course in faithfulness, there is reason cheerfully to improve.

Mrs. Patten esteemed it one of the greatest privileges and honors, that so many to whom she was naturally related, and with whom in general she was acquainted, were professed Christians, and, especially ministers of the Gospel. In this respect, she was distinguished. As it may not displease the reader, and will particularly gratify some of her surviving relatives, a sketch of the affinities will be subjoined; though from want of knowledge, it will be imperfect.

In addition to those already mentioned, one of the brothers of her mother was a min-

ister, Rev. James Davenport, and his son was a minister, Rev. John Davenport. A second brother of her mother, Hon. Abraham Davenport, of Stamford, was a professor and firm supporter of religion, and there was much religion in his family connexions. His daughter married Dr. James Cogswell, a skilful and pious physician, who was son of Rev. Dr. Cogswell, of Windham, and whose only daughter married the Rev. Mr. Fisher. The eldest son of Abraham Davenport, Hon. John Davenport, was pious, and married a daughter of Rev. Mr. Welles, of Stamford. Several of their children were pious; one of them is the wife of Judge Radcliff, Brooklyn, N. Y.

The second son of Abraham Davenport, Hon. James Davenport, was distinguished for ability and usefulness. Three of his daughters married ministers; the Rev. Messrs. Whelpley and Bruen, of N. Y. and Rev. Dr. Skinner, Professor in the Theological Seminary, Andover.

One of the sisters of Mrs. Patten's mother married the Rev. Dr. Williams, of Springfield,

who had three sons in the ministry, one of them, Rev. Dr. Williams, of Tolland. The Rev. Mr. Storrs, who was successor to Dr. Williams of Springfield, married one of his grand-daughters, a pious woman. They had two sons in the ministry, Rev. Mr. Storrs of Braintree, and Rev. Mr. Storrs, president of the Western Reserve college, Ohio. In this connexion, were Rev. Mr. Stebbins, who married a daughter of Rev. Mr. Streat, and Rev. Messrs. Barker and Reynolds.

The father of Mrs. Patten was the only son of pious parents. One of his sisters married Rev. Dr. Pomroy of Hebron, one of whose daughters married Rev. Dr. Macclure of East Windsor, and two of whose grand-daughters married ministers, Rev. Mr. Basset, and the other, pastor of a church in Newark, N. J.

Another sister of the father of Mrs. Patten married Mr. Bingham, a pious man, one of whose daughters married Rev. S. Kirkland, missionary to the Oneida Indians, who was father of Rev. Dr. Kirkland, late president of Harvard university. In this connexion is

Rev. Mr. Bingham, missionary at the Sandwich Islands.

A son of the eldest sister of Mrs. Patten was a minister of the Episcopal order, and settled in Canada. Mrs. Patten's father married, for his second wife, Miss Mary Brinsmade of Milford, a pious woman, by whom he had three sons and two daughters, all of whom became professors of religion, and lived to adult years, and were married.

The eldest son, Hon. John Wheelock, was successor of his father as president of the college, and married Miss Sechm, daughter of a governor of St. Thomas, and daughter-in-law of Mr. Boudinot of New Jersey, a pious woman, by whom he had one child, a daughter, who married Rev. Dr. Allen, president of Bowdoin college, Me.

The eldest daughter married B. Woodward, Esq., for a time a preacher, afterwards professor of mathematics in the college; one of his sons is pastor of a church; another a missionary in Ceylon; and one of his daughters married Rev. Mr. Searl, a missionary in S. C.

The second daughter married Rev. Sylvanus Ripley, professor of Divinity in the college, and was mother of General E. W. Ripley, and General J. Ripley, the former of whom married a daughter of Rev. Mr. Allen, of Pittsfield.

The third son has a son in the ministry, and a daughter, married to Rev. Dr. Marsh, president of Burlington college, Vt.

May those of the relatives who read this list, be solicitous to secure the blessings of that covenant into which the Lord entered with their fathers; and be sensible of the obligations upon them from so many examples, to "shine as lights in the world."

LETTERS.

In the following compilation, it is the object of the transcriber to furnish a sample of Mrs. Patten's manner of writing; and it was his purpose to add several letters *to* her, expressive of the piety and esteem of her friends; but the prescribed limits of the work do not admit of it.

LETTER I.

TO HER SON W. P.

March 8th, 1808.

My very dear Son,

We received your affectionate and consoling letter of February, which gave renewed occasion for gratitude.

There is no mother, I know, that is so happy in her children as your's. I have the satisfaction of seeing them, as I hope, "walking in the truth," of serving God faithfully, from a principle of love. I pray that we may not deceive others, nor be ourselves deceived.

The goodness of God is truly great in preserving the lives of so many of the family; and when repeatedly threatened, especially of late. I think I can see much of the faithfulness and mercy of a covenant keeping God, in his dealings towards us. May it be our study to bring forth fruits meet for *Him*, by whom we have been protected and nourished. But, O! my son, what reason have we to cry with the Prophet, "My leanness, my leanness!" How unprofitable have we been, considering the advantages we have enjoyed under divine cultivation! How indolent considering the fields of labor; and how little affected considering how many souls, unconscious of their danger, are moving beyond the gulf which cannot be repassed.

With respect to sketches of my life, for which you have expressed a solicitude, I have often wished that some were written, for the benefit of my children, if not of others, to show how little our happiness consists in the abundance that we possess; and what encouragement to "stand still and see the salvation of God."

The instances of faith, in ancient and modern times, have not appeared to me strange, in the reasonableness of implicit trust in God, seeking his guidance, of following whither he leads, of the encouragement, the strength, the blessedness of his presence. May he, from his infinite fulness, grant us all these supplies of grace that we need.

I do not know, that for some years, I have felt any particular desires with regard to the things of the

world. I consider it a duty to be industrious and prudent, that we may have enough for ourselves, and to give to others; but in what is spiritual, I feel my desires are very strong to see my posterity in the way of obedience, examples of piety and usefulness, and the cause of religion extend and prevail.

You know, my son, I have been in a great diversity of trials; but I can say, in humility for my great unworthiness, that God has fulfilled his gracious promises to us. There is no earthly friend or property, that, as an object of confidence, can be compared with Him.

Your affectionate Mother,
R. P.

LETTER II.

TO W. AND H. P.

May 17, 1808.

My dear children,

I desire to bless God that I am preserved to answer another of your welcome letters.

I have had a severe attack of disease. I felt very cold, and in great pain; and determined to take some warm tea, and retire to bed. After a few sips, which I threw up, I became lethargic, and remained insensible three or four hours. A physician was immediately with me, and every thing was done that could be; but when restored to recollection, I was still disposed to relapse into a sleep like death. Since my

relief, I have been very feeble, but am gradually gaining strength.

How many times has God appeared for me! O, may my spared life, and all that I have, be devoted to him. Pray for me. I can write but little.

Give grandma's best love to your children, and a kiss to each of them. Tell them I long to see them; and that it is my daily prayer, that, as they advance in life, they may, in heart, leave the world behind, and press forward, with the heavenly inheritance in view.

Your affectionate Mother,

R. P.

LETTER III.

TO THE REV. H. B., MISSIONARY TO THE SANDWICH ISLANDS.

July 5, 1830.

Rev. and dear Sir,

I am happy to forward to you a token of affection, left by my dear departed son, George. The little sacred volume may be a convenient pocket companion, in your removals and excursions among the heathen. My daughters will put up a few trifles for dear Mrs. B. in the package with which this will be sent.

We greatly rejoice in your prosperity, by the blessing of God, in your joint endeavors to advance the kingdom of our glorious Redeemer.

The cause of missions lies very near our hearts. There has no day passed, without our remembrance of you at the throne of grace. God's goodness to you, and all other dear friends in that region, has been very great, and we hope, ere long, to hear of greater things than these, when the spirit shall be poured out in rich abundance, the gospel run and be glorified, and the earth be filled with the knowledge and glory of the divine Redeemer. Happy the instruments in promoting so noble a cause.

And now my dear friends, I know not whether I should ask you to mourn or rejoice with us in the removal of my beloved son. The latter becomes an unworthy mother, who has been instrumental of introducing into the world an heir of glory, to which state I have no reason to doubt he is advanced. Still, the bereavement is very sorrowful; and I doubt not, that an aged mother, in her 91st year, will find an advocate in your compassionate bosom for her grief. He was my youngest child; and not long since, the most healthy in the family. But though the Lord slay me and mine, yet will I trust in him, and when every blessing is flown, will love him for himself alone.

Pray earnestly for us, my dear friends; and for the beloved land of your nativity, lest the heathen rise up in the judgment and condemn us; for many of them, as there is reason to hope, repented at the first annunciation of the gospel; but alas! we, who have ever lived in its meridian lustre, are still hardened in sin.

"Come, Holy Spirit, Heavenly Dove,
With all thy quick'ning powers,
Come, shed abroad a Saviour's love,
And that shall kindle ours."

My family unite with me in best love to yourselves and all the brethren and sisters in your connection, (though unknown) for are we not "*one* in the Lord." That the God of grace may be with you, is the constant prayer of

Your affectionate friend,

R. P.

LETTER IV.

THE ANSWER TO THE PRECEDING, BY THE REV. H. B.

Owyhee, 1832.

Dear Mrs. Patten,

Your friendly letter, I have received, and the precious, little sacred volume, neatly and kindly marked for me, having on the silver clasp, the initials of your dear departed son's name, G. J. P.

It will be a pleasure to use these convenient pocket companions, in some of my exercises among the people; and should they be preserved safely, I hope they may be useful to my little, only son, whose name they bear also.

It is a comfort to us to be so often assured that our Christian friends pray for us, while we attempt to break up the fallow ground, and to sow the good seed even though much may still fall among thorns, and some by the way side, and some in stony places; for some we believe will fall in good ground, and, watered, as it will be by your prayers, will bring forth fruit.

I have recently returned from a short tour of ten days, to a station about 100 miles from me, where the

spirit of the Lord, it is believed, was influencing the hearts of some of the sons and daughters of paganism, to turn from their sins, and to seek an interest in Christ.

Thus you see, that you, who can say, "There has no day passed without my remembrance of you at the throne of grace," have not daily approached the throne of grace for us, and our poor people, in vain.

It would have been a comfort to you to see what a change christianity has produced in a few individuals of this nation. If the Lord can make such trophies among the heathen, what can he not do among the children of Christians, whose parents and ancestors have laid up many prayers for them, and for whom faithful ministers pray and preach, and to whom the whole Bible, with all its claims, speaks from day to day, in a tone of indisputably divine authority?

Let the mothers in Israel take courage, when the sons of the church are ready to faint, God can hear their prayers in the obscurest closet, and send answers of peace, unto the ends of the earth.

I have recently heard of the death of both my parents. But the Lord can take me up. I think I can trust in him.

Yours, truly, H. B.

LETTER V.

TO MRS. S. L., Norwalk.

May 20, 1828.

My very dear niece,

Since the decease of your beloved and worthy son,

in so sudden and distressing a manner,* I have wished to write, but the indisposition of myself and family has prevented. I am now scarcely able to hold my pen; but a sense of duty and affection for you, induce me to make the attempt. The excellent character your son sustained in all his relations, though a source of grief in his removal, is yet a reason for gratitude and consolation, in the hope that he is taken to a higher and a better world.

We ought to submit, and to submit with cheerfulness to the divine dispensation, since God is our Father, and all his dispensations result from infinite benevolence, and wisdom, and mercy. Instead of murmuring, they should cause us to trust in him. Instead of alienating, they should bring us nearer to him. The nearer we are, the greater will be our safety and consolation.

Itis important to understand the loving kindness of the Lord, which is often mysterious. The late Dr. S. of this city, a man of piety and experience in religion, observed, that "were he to go into his closet to thank God for his mercies, afflictions would come first on the list." Sanctified afflictions produce bright views of God, and the most sensible enjoyments.

Your son passed the evening with us before his departure for New York. He said "he had called, by your request; but that in future, he should call on his

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* By the bursting of a boiler in a steam boat, on his passage from Hartford to New York.

own account." We were much pleased with his social qualities, as well as his remarks on religion.

We should be highly gratified by an acquaintance with the survivors of your dear family. I am now 87 years old, and have experienced much of the goodness and faithfulness of God, in both mercies and afflictions, so that I can testify that "goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life;" and I hope, through grace, I shall "dwell in the house of the Lord forever;" even that house "not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

That you, and yours, may experience the joy and peace of believing, is the prayer of

Your affectionate Aunt,

R. P.

LETTER VI.

TO ONE OF HER GRANDSONS.

May, 1822.

My dear J.,

Hearing you are about to leave your father's house, that you may seek employment abroad, let me earnestly entreat you to be faithful in the service of the Lord. If we have no disinterested love for him, and our fellow men, our hearts are bound up in self, and we must be despicable, indeed. May we have just ideas of the divine character; love it for what it is in itself; have a just sense of our own unworthiness, and our constant need of divine guidance and protection.

O, my dear son, this will ever be the first desire of

my heart, and it will be my last petition, that God would grant you that humility, that faith, that love, which constitute a child of God.

I write as a dying parent to a dying child; or, rather, to one that is born to die. May the Lord direct your steps, bless and prosper you, and make you a great blessing. There is much to do in the world. O, how much to restore it from sin and disorder. May you not be idle, but, animated by the spirit of Christ, be efficient in the sphere in which you may be placed, and shine in unfading light.

Dear J.,—Farewell. That we may meet in heaven, though we may not on earth, is the prayer of

Your affectionate, though decaying
Grandmother, in her 83d year.

R. P.

LETTER VII.

TO MRS. A. G.

My dear Madam,

I rejoice in the information contained in your letter, that God has visited H. with the outpourings of his Holy Spirit; an event so long desired by your worthy, but almost despairing, pastor. May the work go on and prosper abundantly.

How wonderful are the condescension and grace of our glorious Redeemer, in arresting sinners in their course to ruin, and turning them into the way of life;

and in his attention to the support and progress of his feeble and unworthy children.

It is good to have a sense of our weakness, and entire dependance on the great Head of the Church for grace and spiritual strength. But, oh! our deceitful, unbelieving hearts! We need repentance from day to day, and renewed faith in the great salvation, wrought out for sinners. May we have our minds stayed on God.

O, my friend! does not your heart leap for joy, that we live to see the light of the present day? May the sun of righteousness, who is becoming extensively visible, soon visit the whole earth, with divine light, and all the blessing of its healing influence! May God visit the vine in this land, which his own right hand has planted, and prune and nurture it, and cause it to bring forth much fruit.

In this place the people are active and eager in worldly affairs; but for this reason inattentive and insensible to religious interests. Pray for us.

God grant to you, and those dear to you, the light of his countenance and all needed good; and if we should never again see each other in this world, may we go from a life of prayer to an eternity of praise.

Believe me

Your affectionate sister in Christ,

R. P.

LETTER VIII.

TO MRS. J. P.

May 22, 1817.

My dear Sister,

This is the first time I have taken my pen in hand since I was brought to the brink of the grave by a dangerous fall. Intending to go to my chamber, after ascending seven or eight stairs, the railing by which I held gave way, and I fell backward to the floor. Considering the nature of the fall, and the injury done to my back and neck, it is an astonishment to all as well as to myself, that I was taken up alive. My reason was continued through the scene. I have since experienced much distress; and now, after six weeks, I am but just beginning to walk alone. May the name of the Lord be praised for his goodness in this wonderful interposition, and all the expressions of his grace. He wounded, and in a great measure has healed. May my breath be spent in praising him, till I shall be called to perform this work, without sin or sorrow, in the world of glory. O, my dear sister, what continued reason have we to live in preparation to obey the summons of our Lord, the time of which is unknown to us, and may be sudden.

We have long hoped for an opportunity to see you while *here;* but now it is doubtful, you are so distant, and the vicissitudes of time are so many and great, and such a mountain of difficulties lies in the way. I desire to bless God for the hope we have of a glorious

immortality; of meeting where our Saviour and our dear friends are gone.

We have reason in our widowed state to notice the goodness and faithfulness of our covenant keeping God. May we ever trust with confidence in his promises, for ourselves, our children, the dear church, and all that is comprised in his kingdom, persuaded that, as he possesses, so he will display infinite perfection.

That God may ever bless you and your dear children, is the prayer of

Your affectionate sister,

R. P.

LETTER IX.

TO ONE OF HER GRANDSONS.

My dear W.

I hear of you frequently, and always that you are doing well, and increasing in respectability. But I am apprehensive you have mistaken your calling; though yet it is not too late for me to hope you may change.

A number have relinquished the profession of the law for the ministry, and have become eminent, the Lord sanctifying their attainments in that profession, and all their accomplishments, to this blessed work.

Ministers and missionaries are much wanted; of lawyers there is a great redundance. By engaging in the ministry, you would never be out of employment, and your employment would be of the highest

kind; and whatever your privations and sufferings might be, your recompense would be proportionally great.

Still, my dear Son, you may serve God in the profession in which you are; and it is my prayer, that you may have grace to be faithful; that you may prosper, and be a blessing in establishing what is right, and vindicating the oppressed.

Give my love to your dear family, who are included with yourself, in the remembrance and prayer of

Your affectionate Grandmother,

R. P.

LETTER X.

TO N. P. H.

My dear nephew,

I wish much to know your sentiments and manner of life, of which, from your absence and distance from me, I am ignorant.

I feel the more solicitous that your soul may be in health and prosper, as I stand responsible for baptismal obligations. You were committed to my care at a tender age, by the request of your dying mother; and from this and other considerations, were much endeared to us. I endeavored to dedicate you sincerely to the God of your life, and the Redeemer who died to to save you, and to the Spirit of grace, to sanctify and preserve you, and prepare you for glory. And now, my child, remember that these vows of God are upon

you. They cannot be retracted; and I trust you do not wish they should be. Go on, then, in the strength of the Lord; and may he strengthen and abundantly bless you.

If I seem too importunate, my son, you will excuse it, not only from my sense of duty, but from the dangers with which you are surrounded, and my advanced age.

Corrupt principles are very prevalent; one of the most plausible of which is, that only morality is necessary to salvation. This cannot go beyond the grave. At the bar of God, repentance of sin and faith in Christ are indispensable to acceptance. Yet these are productive of the strictest and purest morality; for we cannot repent of sin, if we indulge one sin; and without repentance, it is in vain to trust in Christ for pardon. I wish you to be moral; but with views more enlarged and exalted, I pray that you may be a Christian.

From my advanced years, I must do what I have to do quickly. Soon I shall go, whence I shall not return; and I would neglect no effort in my power to promote the best interests of my dear relatives and others.

Be assured that I have ever remembered you with my own children, in my addresses at the throne of grace, that you may have the friendship of God, and be faithful on earth, and blessed in heaven.

I am

Your affectionate Grandmother,

R. P.

LETTER XI.

TO G. W.

My dear nephew,

What a blessing that the world is under the government of God, and that we know his wisdom and perfection; while it is our indispensable duty to submit to him, we may do it with cheerfulness, since he is, in all circumstances, an object of hope.

I have been informed by Mrs. B. that the hand of the Lord is laid heavily upon you in taking from you the *desire of your eyes;* and one dear, not only in your own sight, but in the sight of others. All natural excellence is not too lovely to die. It is frail as the grass, or the flower of the field. But we rejoice in that moral excellence which the dear departed possessed, and that we may hope she has joined the spirits of the just made perfect, and bears her part in that song of praise to God and the Lamb for which eternity is not too long.

If we resign *ourselves*, we shall resign all who are dear to us, all that we have into the hands of God. If we murmur at bereavements or losses, it is an evidence we have not devoted ourselves to God. May we comply with this duty, and have that peace which passeth all understanding.

My family sympathize with you, and send their love. Do write soon to

Your affectionate Aunt,

R. P.

LETTER XII.

TO W. P.

Sept. 25, 1831.

My very dear Son,

I was contemplating earnestly to request you to come and see what happiness we were enjoying in temporal and spiritual blessings. But the great and wise Dispenser of all events has seen fit to bring a new affliction upon us, by calling your sister R. into a trying scene, from a fall which endangers her limb, and even her life.

God has doubtless some important purpose to answer by this peculiar dispensation, that our Christian graces, if any we have, may be made manifest, and I humbly trust the result will prove, that this desirable effect is not wholly unaccomplished.

Oct. 4.

I began this letter when your sister's state was alarming, and concluded not to finish it till some more decided opinion could be formed. I think she has been enabled to exercise faith and patience, wonderfully. The physician says she is doing well, and ascribes this almost miraculous recovery, under Providence, to *temperance ;* he says she is just 25.

We are favored with a very interesting and hopefully pious young physician from New York, Dr. K. He is very patient and gentle ; and sometimes, when, with him, we view the injured ancle, he points out the operation of nature in the tendency of the severed parts to unite, and perform their accustomed functions.

Truly we "are fearfully and wonderfully made; and that, our souls know right well. What shall we render to the Lord for all his benefits. We will take the cup of salvation, and call on the name of the Lord. We will will pay the vows which our souls made when we were in trouble."

We always rejoice to hear any thing to the comfort and advantage of yourself, your family, or people; are glad an addition is to be made to your church. "May it be increased, with all the increase of God." O that those who have remained blind and insensible under the means of grace, might awake and be converted. Then my aged eyes, which are filled with tears of sorrow for their perilous state, would weep for joy, at their having "passed from death to life,"—that they are "no more conformed to the world, but transformed by the renewing of their mind, proving what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God."

God grant you may be faithful and abundantly successful; may he lift the light of his countenance upon you, and give you peace. So prays

Your aged, but not forgetful mother,

R. P.

LETTER XIII.

TO G. W.

My dear Nephew,

May your trials yield unto you the peaceable fruits of righteousness. May you be brought more and more

to live on God as your portion, and to him as the object of your existence.

The sources of happiness in God are boundless. If our hearts are right with him; if we read his word with understanding, if we pray in faith, we shall find him always near, a present help, and shall partake of the fulness of joy.

But O, our unbelieving hearts! what torrents of sin flow from them, ready to overwhelm us and sweep us away! Truly we are without hope, unless from the grace of Christ, his sanctifying spirit, his atoning blood, his all perfect righteousness. Blessed be his name, that we may look to him, assured that he is willing, and able, to do all that in us, and for us, that we need.

I have had many distressing scenes in my walk, thus far, through this wilderness; more than I can enumerate. But I must confess, that I have had a faithful, covenant keeping God at my right hand, to whom I know by experience, that if we commit *all* our concerns, in a child-like temper, we need not fear.

The time of our trial is short,—but a few years. May we be patient unto the end. May we "do what our hands find to do, with our might; for in the grave, to which we hasten, there is no wisdom, nor device, nor work, nor knowledge."

May we be faithful, and finally found of our God in peace, prays

Your affectionate Aunt,

R. P.

LETTER XIV.

TO REV. W. A.

March 28, 1830.

Worthy and dear sir,

We received your very refreshing letter, for which we return you our grateful acknowledgments. We never needed consolation more. Though the goodness of God, through all our trials, has been very great. I trust we have found, in some good measure, by experience, the fulfilment of those great and precious promises, which you so kindly recommend to our consideration ; and we humbly pray that you, dear sir, may be comforted of God with the same comfort wherewith you have been enabled to comfort those who were in trouble.

It is, indeed, peculiarly consoling, that our heavenly father does not " infuse a single needless ingredient of bitterness in the cup he giveth his children to drink."

Forever blessed be the Lord for the wonders of redeeming love, and for the rich variety of blessings which we enjoy, in consequence thereof. May all that appertain to our dear families, be partakers of that " fulness of joy, and those pleasures forevermore, that flow at God's right hand.

We were much gratified to hear from the habitation of my dear and honored father, and from the silent abode of my beloved and honored mother. Though but four years old when she died, I recollect many things respecting her, which have proved beneficial to me through life. It is probable that your dear offspring

may be able to say the same, many years hence, of *their* dear departed mother.

Let us praise God, my dear sir, for the great blessing of *hope*. May we patiently and prayerfully wait for the salvation of God; not seeking great things here below, for ourselves, or dear ones. Has not God said, "Seek them not." Riches oftener prove a curse, than a blessing, to their possessors. From my own observation, through a long course of years, and the concurrence of others, I have reason to believe the statement correct.

For several days, as strength would permit, I have been penning these lines. It may be the last communication you will receive from me. Should I be so happy as to reach the heavenly shore, shall I not bear the gladsome tidings, that you are daily growing in grace, and training up your dear children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, heirs of an "inheritance that is incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away?" and that the dear Seminary, under your faithful guidance, is rapidly increasing in knowledge, human and divine, and that from this fountain, are flowing "streams that make glad the city of our God?"

And now, my dear sir, farewell. "The Lord bless you, and keep you; lift up the light of his countenance upon you, and give you peace," prays

Your aged and decaying
friend, of 90 years,

R. P.

ERRATA.

Page	29,	line	4, for *The* read *Her*.
	50,	"	17, after in, insert *her*.
	65,	"	18, after appear, add, *to the soul*.
	69,	"	24, for *these*, read *those*.
	81,	"	3, for *insensible*, read *speechless*.
	98,	"	20, for *distracted*, read *distorted*.
	99	"	4, for *rod*, read *root*.
	"	"	8, for *dew*, read *bow*.
	"	"	11 & 13, for *these*, read *those*.
	100	"	1, for *trust*, read *host*.
	105	"	15, omit the word *not*.
	121	"	23, for *in*, read *on*.

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